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Pittsburgh, 1956

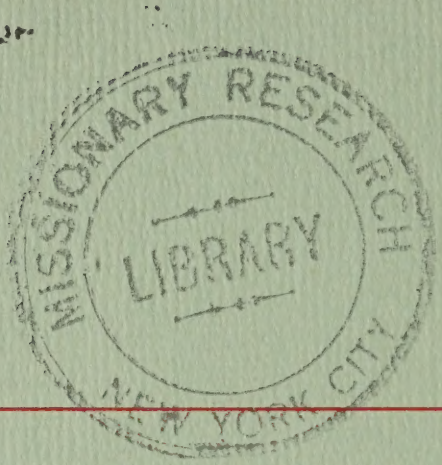
AMERICAN ABUNDANCE

POSSIBILITIES AND PROBLEMS

from the Perspective
of the Christian Conscience

MESSAGE AND REPORTS

THIRD NATIONAL STUDY CONFERENCE
ON THE CHURCH AND ECONOMIC LIFE



"The Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of Churches has taken deep satisfaction in the convening of the Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life under the theme 'The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance.' The Division commends to the churches for thoughtful and prayerful consideration this Conference Message which was adopted by the Conference, and the reports of the Discussion Groups which were received and referred to the churches by the Conference. Readers are reminded that any conference, even though called by the National Council of Churches, speaks only for itself."

Action of the Executive Board of the Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., June 5, 1956

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Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania **April 12-15, 1956**

THEME

The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance

CONFERENCE MESSAGE AND GROUP REPORTS

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Introduction

Background and Theme

The Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life was convened by the National Council of Churches and met at the Call of the President (Appendix A); it was made up of delegates and consultants officially appointed by the churches and church bodies; the Conference spoke solely on its own behalf. It was primarily a working conference with its members discussing and reporting on eleven aspects of the conference theme: "The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance." Each report is the responsibility of the particular discussion group; the Conference Message, on the other hand, was discussed and approved by the Conference as a whole. The theme and the conference documents herein carry forward the program of the churches related to economic life which has developed from earlier similar conferences in 1947, 1950, and 1952.

Summary of Conference Membership

The 350 delegates and consultants were appointed by 28 denominations and 23 councils of churches, also 8 major units in the National Council of Churches. In addition denominations in Canada and Australia and the Canadian and World Councils of Churches were represented by consultants. The participants came from 32 states and the District of Columbia.

Of the 350 conference members 204, or 60%, were lay men and women from a wide variety of occupations. The balance of 146 were clergymen—pastors, program and other church executives, and seminary faculty members. Of the lay delegates 50 are engaged in business and industry, 25 in labor, 18 in agriculture, and 19 are professional economists. Other secular occupations of the lay delegates include: education, law, government, home-making, journalism and mass communications, medicine, science and engineering.

Major Program Elements

Conference Addresses. — At the opening service of worship, the conference luncheon, and two general sessions, the conference heard addresses on various aspects of the general theme by widely representative religious and economic leaders. (Appendix B).

Discussion Groups. — Each delegate and consultant was a member of one of the six discussion groups in Series A *(The Christian Conscience in Relation to the Maintenance, Use, and Growth of Our Economy of Abundance)* and one of the five groups in Series B *(Responsibilities of the Churches Issuing from the Cultural and Social Implications of Our Economy of Abundance)*. Prior to the conference each participant received the pamphlet, "The Christian Conscience and American Abundance,"

containing two conference background papers by Professor Leland Gordon, Granville, Ohio, and Professor Reinhold Niebuhr, New York, N. Y. In addition each delegate had a discussion syllabus with questions especially prepared for his A and B groups. Each of the eleven groups had a chairman, secretary, and resource leader; in Series A the resource leader was an economist, in Series B a theologian. Each group drew up a report of its major conclusions. After being presented to the conference in plenary session and briefly discussed, each report was "received and referred to the churches for study and appropriate action."

The Conference Message

On the final day the conference in plenary session discussed and adopted a Message which had been prepared by a 26-member committee. Each of the eleven discussion groups had at least one member on the Committee which held an open hearing for delegates. The committee membership included:

Dr. Justin Wroe Nixon, Rochester, N. Y.; *Chairman;* Jerry Voorhis, Chicago, Ill., *Secretary;* A. Howard Bode, Cockeysville, Md.; Charles F. Brannan, Denver, Col.; John Caughman, Spartanburg, S. C.; Elmer Cope, Lewisburg, Ohio; President Luther H. Foster, Tuskegee Institute, Ala.; Rev. W. Henry Goodloe, Fort Smith, Ark.; Prof. Leland Gordon, Granville, Ohio; Rev. John V. Machell, Jr., Jamestown, N. Y.; Raymond W. Miller, Boston, Mass.; Hjalmar Petersen, St. Paul, Minn.; Mrs. Stephen M. Pronko, Brentwood, Mo.; Paul J. Raver, Seattle, Wash.; Noel Sargent, Garden City, N. Y.; Charles H. Seaver, White Plains, N. Y.; Charles B. Shuman, Chicago, Ill.; Prof. Joseph Sittler, Maywood, Ill.; C. C. Smith, Cleveland, Ohio; Rev. Fr. Theophilos P. Theophilopoulos, Canton, Ohio; Dr. Adel F. Throckmorton, Topeka, Kan.; Prof. Francis D. Tyson, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Rev. M. Moran Weston, New York, N. Y.; Al Whitehouse, Washington, D. C.; *Ex Officio*—Charles P. Taft, Cincinnati, Ohio; Prof. Roy Blough, New York, N. Y.

Conference Follow-Up

During the conference the administrative secretary gave as the main elements in the conference follow-up: (1) The Conference Report with the Message and discussion group reports to be available in printed form by June. (2) The major conference addresses to be available in pamphlet, or mimeographed form, in June. (3) A discussion and program guide, based upon the Conference Message and discussion group reports together with methods, resources, and techniques for denominational, community, and local church conferences and meetings related to the Pittsburgh topics, to be ready in the fall. (4) Church and Economic Life Week held annually and scheduled for January 20-26, 1957, will focus on the conference theme. (5) The Department of the Church and Economic Life will seek the opportunity to cooperate with councils of churches and denominational groups in planning and conducting post-Pittsburgh meetings.

Opening Remarks

By Hon. Charles P. Taft

Conference Chairman

Nearly twenty years ago the World Council of Churches began at the Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State, and one of the five sections of that Conference reported on the Church and Economic Order. A very green and ignorant young lawyer sat on the drafting committee with Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, John Baillie (now a President of the World Council), T. S. Eliot, R. H. Tawney, and others.

Nine years ago the Federal Council of Churches called a Study Conference here in Pittsburgh on the Church and Economic Life. From the recommendations of that Conference came our Department of the Church and Economic Life.

In 1950 we held a second Study Conference, this time in Detroit, on the Responsibility of Christians in an Interdependent Economic World.

In 1952 as the agent of the World Council of Churches, and in conjunction with the Canadian Council of Churches, we held a Conference on the Christian and His Daily Work in Buffalo.

As I look through the reports of these four gatherings of laymen with their professional advisers, I get a sense of process and increasing lay participation. These are now more articulate laymen, skilled in the process of thinking about applying Christianity where they work. The churches have a reservoir of know-how and a far greater concern for what keeps laymen awake nights.

There have been fears of conservative religionists and fears of conservative business people about these conferences. Sometimes points of view were not adequately represented, or if represented, not adequately expressed. Sometimes there was too great concern for a pronouncement of some kind, or for the absence of a more prophetic pronouncement.

But each of these conferences was most important in its stimulus to the process of discussion and thought for many months after it adjourned. In nineteen years we have learned a lot about what disturbs laymen who make up the Church, as they go out during the week as churchmen in the world of work. We are now far more ready in each of our member churches to serve this need, and to do that intelligently and effectively.

Our preparatory material here illustrates this. It is rather sharply divided in two parts, a factual description of our economic system, and a keen common-sense analysis of the ethical and religious problems we face who operate the system.

The factual description is more complete here and less controversial than at our earlier conferences. We understand economics better. The religious analysis is more realistic. That makes our problem tougher, but I am sure it is more of a challenge to you laymen to make this Conference once more the beginning of a process of lay education to more effective Christian living.

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THE CONFERENCE MESSAGE

Adopted unanimously in plenary session, April 15, 1956

A New Age in History — Its Promises and Perils

We are entering a new age in the history of mankind. For the first time in human experience it appears possible that enough can be produced to meet the basic needs of man. We may refer to this new period as an age of abundance in contrast with past ages of economic scarcity. The promises of this economy are great but its perils are so real that we cannot evade the challenges which this new age brings to the Christian conscience. To the shallow expression, "We never had it so good," the Christian must reply, "We never had such heavy demands upon the Christian conscience."

The present economy of abundance in the United States arises from a variety of factors. These include the availability of rich natural resources, the institutions and practices of a free society, and the influences of religion. They also include the development of capable management and an intelligent body of workers equipped with specialized skills; the development of efficient business organization, a responsible labor movement, modernized agriculture, and broadly-owned mutual enterprises; a system of universal education; and policies of government sustaining the processes of production and consumption.

But the factor which more than any other distinguishes our prosperity of today is that science and technology in a broadening stream have been flowing ever more rapidly into the practical activities of mankind.

These factors have operated within the framework of a mixed economy. The genius of the economy of the United States has been its flexibility. Flexibility has permitted adaptation. As technological, political, and international conditions have changed the economy has changed. When the public welfare required more public regulation of economic activity, more regulation was provided. Over the years the United States economy has evolved into a strong and effective mixture of free private enterprise, public enterprise, and public regulation. In this context has developed the private incentive to produce and the public conscience to share the increasing volume of goods and services.

It is in the United States more than in any other country that this conjunction of factors has been taking place. It is therefore the more imperative that Christians in our country try to understand the implications of these great changes for the moral and spiritual life of man.[1]*

Christ's Teaching Places Economic Life at the Center of Our Faith

As Christians we must interpret such an event as the coming of a new economic age from the point of view of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

In the Christian understanding of the responsibility of man in the economic order, the primary fact is that God is the Creator of all that is, and all creative forces flow from him. Man is a creature of the Creator,

* See references at end of Message, p. 11.

and his role is that of a trustee. The scope of this trusteeship and the range of its redemptive possibilities are revealed in God's revelation in Christ. For Christ identifies himself completely with every man in every man's need. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." This fact places the economic life of man in the very center of Christian faith and obedience. Here the conscience is deeply troubled. For the need of one's neighbor is Christ's own call to Christian faith and work.

In the coming of an economy of abundance we recognize anew the promise of goodness in God's creation. Of such an event we would say, "It is the Lord's doing and is marvelous in our eyes."

Yet in the Christian perspective nothing is clearer than the continuance of the fact of sin in the life of man. In every environment and in every historic era man is confronted by the choice whether to seek in humility the will of God in administering the resources God has entrusted to him, or to use the divine gifts of nature and man's genius simply to satisfy his self-centered desires. It is clear from the Bible and from experience that the selfishness of man vastly multiplies his problems and threatens his destruction on every level of attainment.

The warnings of Scripture against the seductions of prosperity are most explicit. If ever there was a time when as a people we needed to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God—that time is now. We may be sure that to whom much has been given of him shall much be required.

Increasing Abundance Adds New Dimension to Christian Obligation

In an age of scarcity when there is not enough to go around, when privation is inevitable, the obligation of Christians is to do all they can for the relief of suffering, knowing as they do so that a great pool of need will still remain.

In an age of increasing abundance the Christian obligation assumes new dimensions. For in such an age Christian duty is not done until everyone has access to the basic necessities of life.[1] But this Christian duty cannot be discharged by the mere giving of material goods to those who do not share in the abundance. It must be done in ways which recognize the dignity of each person and each group whom Christians would help. It must be done by the sharing of such knowledge, and assistance in the development of such facilities and institutions, and in the creation of such conditions as will enable people to help themselves. It must be done by methods that will call the Christian principle of mutuality into play.[1]

We must recognize the fact that even as we complain of problems of "surplus" there are in our own country large numbers of people who do not share in the general abundance. Improved as is the distribution of income in our country and profoundly encouraging as is the substantial increase in the welfare and income of the middle groups in the economic scale, it is still true that about one-fourth of all families in the United States have annual money incomes of less than $2,000, not nearly enough to

sustain a life of health and hope.* Among those whose share in the general abundance is particularly low are most of the smaller-scale farm families, some groups of wage-earners, and numbers of recent immigrants and newcomers to our country. Moreover, discrimination and segregation practices against minority races deprive many of their members of the chance to earn a fair share of the fruits of this new age or to contribute in their full measure to the nation's welfare.[1, 2]

The Christian conscience in an age of abundance must be troubled until these pockets of want are changed to areas of opportunity for substantial progress toward sharing in the creation and benefit of the abundance which most of our population enjoy. Every barrier to such opportunity for these people must be broken down—whether it be racial discrimination, economic injustice or exploitation, lack of educational opportunity, segregation in the schools, or inadequate development of social institutions which help people to help themselves. From the Christian point of view no one in the United States can be regarded as a second-class citizen.[1, 2, 3]

As we look beyond the borders of our own country we find a world where millions of people are hungry or ill-fed. No people can call itself Christian, if, possessed of the means of abundance, it fails to exert every effort within its power to relieve want wherever it exists. No people can live in isolated plenty in the midst of a needy world and expect to avoid the withering of its Christian spirit. As stewards of abundance, owing all to God, we must in simple justice and brotherhood share with those in need.[4]

There are and there will be circumstances where stark suffering or the consequences of disaster justify and require the direct giving of what people need. In such circumstances the giving should be done with no expectation of return, no political strings on the gift, and with mutual respect and regard between the recipient and the giver.

But a more far-reaching Christian act, which will build for better Christian relationships, is assistance to people to help themselves, the sharing not only of things but of knowledge, techniques, methods, and the creative spirit. To this end Christians should support substantial participation by individuals, private agencies and the government of the United States in a long-range program of cooperation with the people of other nations.[1, 5] Such programs should include the promotion of mutually advantageous world trade and assistance in the development of the less economically developed countries of the world. In these endeavors the agencies of the United Nations should be used as fully as possible.[6]

Christian Conscience and Individual Choices

In our time it is required not only of the Church but of individual Christians that they make certain choices and decisions in the light of the Gospel. The Christian must choose to wage peace and to do all in his power to prevent war. But he must face the full implications of his decision. He must realize that national armament can never bring any permanent

* For detailed data see "Your Christian Conscience and American Abundance" by Leland Gordon and Reinhold Niebuhr, pp. 15-16. National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York, N.Y. 35¢.

peace. It can do no more than buy time in which to wage peace by Christian methods, using every economic, moral, intellectual, and spiritual resource to that end.

Progress is not inevitable, nor is any guarantee of continuance of our prosperity to be found in the pattern of historical events. In endeavoring to make sure that the abundance we see about us does not prove a false dawn, Christians must choose and support methods of maintaining and increasing that abundance which are consistent with the Christian ethic. They cannot accept the idea that military expenditures are a necessary prop to our economy, but seek their reduction at the earliest time and to the greatest extent that is consistent with the safety of the free world.[7] Christians should decide now to support constructive substitutes for military expenditures when the latter can be reduced. Among these, besides additional overseas economic development programs, are the expansion of programs for the elimination of slums, the redevelopment of blighted areas, and conservation of neighborhoods in American cities,[1, 8] for the building of hospitals and carrying forward a broad attack on disease, for the maintenance and construction of highways, and for the orderly development of natural resources.

The Christian conscience can no longer tolerate the neglect of our children's future and welfare of which we are at present guilty despite our increasing abundance. Confronted by our overburdened educational system, Christians must lead the way toward expanding the school facilities and providing adequate pay for the teachers, both of which we so desperately need.[9]

The Christian confronts in our time other choices and duties which cannot be escaped. As organization develops in business, labor, agriculture, or among consumers it becomes the duty of the Christian member therein to regard his participation as a solemn responsibility of his Christian vocation. He must seek to make any group to which he belongs genuinely democratic in nature, so that it can fulfill its basic function of giving to its membership that sense of significant participation that is a fundamental need of man. He must seek to bring the group to pursue policies making for the general public welfare, and not alone for its own members' gain.[1]

There is no necessary contradiction between an economy of abundance and the principles of Christian living. But the Christian must always realize that an increasing volume of goods and services does not necessarily contribute to the "more abundant life." As a consumer, the Christian has choices of profound importance to make. One of these is to spend his income on goods and services which promote human welfare rather than on those which are useless or harmful to mankind. Another important choice and challenge is to avoid the sin of thoughtless waste and selfish dissipation of income and goods. The Christian cannot justify expenditures beyond his reasonable needs on the excuse that he is thereby supporting an abundant economy.

In an age of potential abundance there is a special temptation to uncritical conformity with things as they are which the Christian must resist.[1] The church itself faces this danger. In such a time as this there rests upon every Christian a supreme obligation to heed the call of St. Paul when he

said: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

The Gravest Challenge — Can We Stand Abundance?

One of the gravest challenges facing the people of the United States is found in the question, "Can we stand abundance?" If abundance makes us vain, boastful, possessive, or intolerant, our culture, in spite of our Christian inheritance, will go the way of many cultures of the past.

We rejoice that Christian churches are becoming increasingly aware of this challenge as well as of other challenges this age is bringing. The Church—clergy and laity together—led by the Holy Spirit, has now the obligation to rediscover its nature and purpose and to adapt its functions and methods so that men and women in our time will be really confronted by Christ and the promise of the true abundance which He alone can bring.

In its teaching function the Church should relate to the workings of the economic order the great principles of respect for human dignity, protection of human freedom, securing of justice and good will in human relations.[1] In their administrative functions and especially in their employment practices the churches should search their own consciences to the end that they apply, to their own work, standards at least as high as those they commend to society at large.[1] In its prophetic function the Church should lay its hand on the body politic and say, "Thou ailest here and here." In its counseling and healing functions it should minister to the integrity of the person and to the healthy unity of body and mind, in an age when life is becoming increasingly specialized and fragmented. In its evangelistic function the Church should seek the redemption of the whole man in all his relationships. In all these spheres the Christian laity have a singular opportunity and responsibility.

Under God, this age of abundance, bringing a rich experience of interdependence to men and nations, can be an age in which the Church of Christ undertakes its task with new urgency. For it is preeminently the Church that is charged with pointing men to the supreme source of guidance and power in One who said, "I came to save the world."

References to Pertinent Actions by the National Council of Churches

1. cf., National Council of Churches' Statement on "Christian Principles and Assumptions for Economic Life" adopted September 15, 1954
2. cf., NCC Statement on "The Churches and Segregation," adopted June 11, 1952
3. " " " " "The Church and the Agricultural Migrants," adopted Sept. 19, 1951
4. " " " " "The Churches and Technical Assistance," adopted June 16, 1951
5. " " " " "Technical Assistance," adopted May 18, 1954
6. " " " " "The International Situation," adopted Jan. 17, 1951
7. " " " " "International Regulation and Reduction of Armaments," adopted Nov. 28, 1951
8. " " " " "Federal Aid to Education," adopted May 18, 1954
9. " " " " "The Churches Concern for Housing," adopted Nov. 17, 1953

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

Each of the following reports, after presentation to the plenary session by the chairman or other representative of the group and discussion from the floor, was received by the Conference and referred to the churches for study and appropriate action.

Series A

General Subject: *The Christian Conscience in Relation to the Maintenance, Use, and Growth of Our Economy of Abundance.*

GROUP A-I. Manpower and Employment

Introduction

Man must work for bread, that is, provide the goods and services that sustain his family and himself. But man has other motives for working since he usually prefers productive, meaningful activity to idleness. He has need for more than material satisfactions. To attain bread for one's self, it is true, is a material aim, but to attain bread for others has a spiritual purpose. The Christian, therefore, sees man's need for bread in its spiritual aspects. There is a Christian concern with human beings as they go about their daily work; not only how persons work, but in what setting, with what opportunities for self-realization, and in what groups associated with their employment. The Christian recognizes society's responsibility for the fullest use of the capacities and talents of all persons. Full employment, with a minimum of involuntary idleness, can, therefore, be assumed to be a Christian goal.

Group A-I gave its attention to the circumstances in our economy that are required to bring opportunities for employment and maximum use of the capacities and talents of all persons who so desire it. There was recognition of the fact that full employment in our type of complex economy rests upon rising levels of productivity and of employment, and that these levels are to be maintained by high levels of consumption and investment, with government prepared to supplement or compensate with appropriate spending and taxing measures when the need appears. The group enumerated a wide range of problems in this field. Time was insufficient to explore and analyze them all. A few selected significant problems discussed in the group are presented in the following paragraphs.

Problems of Manpower

The fact that people perform their daily work in an environment of continuous change, more accelerated in some occupations and areas than in others, was of first and overwhelming interest. Such changes as modification of consumer wants, technological change—currently manifested in "automation" in industry and commerce and new processes in agriculture—and the movement of industries which leaves "stranded communities" in its wake, were understood to be enduring and unavoidable characteristics

of a dynamic economy. The human damages from such change were assessed —displacement of workers from jobs and income, and deterioration and obsolescence of their skills—and were recognized as having long-range effects, and, unless corrected by positive action, productive of pockets of unemployment and want in an economy that we describe as "abundant." It is realized that automation in industry will probably have long-run favorable effects on employment because consumers absorb increasing amounts of new or improved industrial products, unlike new processes in agriculture which produce abundance beyond the effective demand of domestic markets. The immediate effects of automation, however, may be unfavorable to the welfare of workers concerned. Thus, in spite of the high level of abundance which we have been enjoying in our country, there are islands of poverty in a sea of plenty. It is in conformity neither with Christian ethics nor with good economics that such areas of poverty should exist.

Other areas also in which there is insufficient use of labor resources were explored, and means for fuller use of human capacities were suggested.

In periods when unemployment is feared, specific groups of workers often face more restricted opportunities for employment than do other groups. During periods of high-level employment such barriers begin to crumble, but not always fast enough to provide society with all the talents and capacities which the groups possess. Individuals belonging to minority groups are most frequently aware of the slow disappearance of prejudice against their employment. One device for hastening the full utilization of skills and labor power of all persons, regardless of race, religion, or national origin, is through enactment and enforcement of Fair Employment Practice laws at either local, state, or federal levels. Group A-I felt that the Church should regard FEP laws as valuable instruments, and should go forward to promote their enactment and effective enforcement. The group is aware that such laws are not the complete answer, that other community action is essential, and that voluntary groups in the community and the churches should persist in helping to bring about acceptance of mixed working forces and in promoting integration. Joint efforts in the community also promote desegregation in other areas than employment, such as housing and church membership. In this respect the Church should be seriously concerned with its own problem and as an employer bound by its own ethic. In so far as it preaches the brotherhood of man it might well examine at all levels the racial composition of its own staffs.

Providing an equal chance to be hired is one means of opening opportunity to disadvantaged groups. Their promotion to better jobs on equal terms with others is also more likely if the community circumstances are more favorable, for an approving environment encourages the individual to seek self-improvement and stimulates the schools and work places to offer him training to acquire higher skills. If management and unions also modify their contracts to substitute plant-wide or company-wide seniority arrangements for departmental seniority, a worker belonging to a minority group will find it easier to be upgraded. Vocational counselors and teachers might also encourage competent youths of all groups to undertake training for skilled jobs, because barriers are more likely to give way if com-

petence of job applicants can be demonstrated. Apprenticeship programs, like school vocational training, should be opened to qualified youths without discrimination as to race, religion, or national origin.

Two other groups whose capacities may be insufficiently used are older workers and married women. It was recognized that the worker should have greater discretion in choosing a retirement age than under current arrangements, and that problems of permanent disability require special types of study and legislation. A rigid retirement age deprives the economy in many cases of experience and skills of valuable workers, oftentimes irreplaceable in a tight labor market.

The special problems involved in the employment of mothers with young children were carefully considered, and it was clear that no categorical answer could be given. In some situations certainly the integrity of the family may be in jeopardy if a mother is employed outside the household and is not present to care for her young children; and even in some cases her absence may contribute to her children's delinquency. It was also recognized, however, that the Church before taking a stand must study each case in its economic setting. A married woman may be employed in order to raise in desirable ways the family's standard of living. She may work also to provide scope for her talents and capacities that the household fails to provide and thus may make a worthwhile contribution to the life of the nation.

Low pay standards may contribute to the necessity for the woman to work. The woman worker, with or without young children, in order to procure and maintain employment, may have to accept lower wages for equal work than a man receives, and may find opportunities for promotion denied to her. Such conflicts in values need study and correction. Unions and management should be challenged to remove double pay standards in contracts they negotiate, and women workers should be encouraged to seek better training and promotion. It is of Christian concern that women should have an opportunity to develop their capacities and to make the maximum contributions to their families and to society.

Handicapped workers constitute another underemployed group who can make a contribution to production and a more effective use of their capacities. Rehabilitation programs of the states are completely altering our formerly held conceptions of "the lame, the halt, and the blind." Employers should be encouraged to make every possible use of their skills without prejudice in so far as they match job specifications, and other workers should be willing to accept them to do the jobs for which they are qualified. Society has a responsibility to understand that such workers are available, are as competent as the non-handicapped with respect to their developed skills, and usually prove to be faithful, reliable workers.

The problem of vocational guidance has already been mentioned. Today society cannot afford to overlook any talents possessed by gifted young persons, for without them we may fail to realize our maximum efficiency. If youths are not able to obtain informed and wise vocational counseling, they may find themselves in blind-alley occupations with years wasted and talents unrealized.

It is not always easy for workers to shift to new or different occupations,

industries, or regions. The older the worker, the more difficult the shift may be. Attachment to a community or to a familiar job or skill blocks the way to change, and understandably so. Family obligations, community ties, and other environmental circumstances tend to immobilize workers. Seniority rules may also serve in some situations as a strait jacket for the worker, in spite of the fact that they are desirable security measures in other situations. If a skill becomes obsolete or a factory closes down, the worker pushed into the labor market may find no comparable opportunities for re-employment in his own community. Individuals or families here and there may seek their living elsewhere, but communities cannot so move. The problem of bringing other industry to such pools of available workers may be more easily solved in some cases than shifting masses of workers to new areas. Such problems are highlighted in our present-day situation by rapid technological change in agriculture, with consequent displacement of farm workers, by the spread of automation in industry and commerce, and by the shift of industrial plants through mergers or migration to other geographical areas, such as textile mills from New England to the South.

Some Suggested Corrective Measures

The maximum effective use of human skills, talents, and powers has never been achieved in our history. Our objective of a completely effective use may never be realized, but we should strive toward the goal nevertheless. Each group in society has a responsibility for helping in its way to encourage persons to make the fullest use of their talents and capacities, and to set the stage for most effective bringing together of capacity and the job where it is needed. Labor and management have a responsibility to undertake careful and joint planning where workers may be displaced and new opportunities for their employment are needed. If processes are likely to be changed, a part of the planning for new processes should include planning for the transfer of the individuals who will no longer be needed on their customary jobs. If the industry where they are employed is large with varied opportunities for transfer, their retraining may be an in-service type of training or apprenticeship. If the plant is small or highly specialized, it may be necessary to enlist the cooperation of community authorities and groups. If the contemplated shifts include movement of the plant or job to other areas, the question of arrangements for moving workers needs to be thoroughly explored.

The community—educational authorities, organized labor, public employment services, churches, civic organizations—has an unescapable obligation to aid in the planning for industrial change and to see that lines of communication with industrial planning are kept open. A base for community planning is the job survey. Workers should have opportunities provided in their communities for retraining and for brush-up in their own skills. Apprenticeship programs should not be neglected. Adult education should also address itself to the task of building attitudes that recognize the human element in the change.

In this situation churches are in a position to minister to the needs of people in areas where disturbing occupational changes are threatened.

They are in a position, through their work with young people, to cooperate with vocational guidance experts in the community, steering young people into channels where there is promise of future growth. Vocational guidance needs to take into consideration the fact that future occupational trends in our complex economy will probably continue toward professional and service jobs and away from the primary and processing industries. Such jobs should be emphasized and their attractive features brought to the attention of those who are choosing vocations.

There was general agreement that the shorter work-week was not far off. Such a change is in the line of development which the past century has witnessed and is being hastened by the rapidity of technological change now going on. A 30-hour week without reduction in pay may become a feature of our highly mechanized industries. How soon other industries less adaptive to rapid changes in productivity will follow was not clear from the evidence presented. Certain related problems were recognized, such as the inflationary effect of the shorter work-week if it is not offset by economies in operation of the industry or business concerned. The effective use of added leisure was also recognized as a problem for society, particularly challenging to the churches.

Special Responsibilities of the Churches

In considering the responsibility of the churches for problems concerned with the work of human beings, stress was laid upon certain underlying principles that should not be overlooked. In the first place the Christian gospel has relevance for man's daily work and daily bread. In the second place, the Church has the function of reconciliation. There is no single economic or social interest with which the Church should be identified. It should actively endeavor to reconcile all interests, bringing diverse groups together.

The means by which reconciliation may be effected are various, and only a few are suggested here. The role is not an easy one to carry; it is demanding of energy, skill, patience, and persistence, as well as a passion for cooperation.

It was suggested that some specialization in the preparation of candidates for the ministry would be desirable, so as to fit some of them to be specialists in the area of industrial relations. Their services can be more and more effectively used in the country's industrial communities.

The study of the community by the Church, with the use of the best community resources, is also desirable. The Church should bring together in face-to-face situations different groups from the communities to confront problems and solve them. Resource persons with diverse backgrounds should be sought for this purpose.

In its contacts with young persons the Church is in a particularly good position to emphasize the value of setting high goals and pointing out the satisfactions of a life of service. The motives are there if they are properly exploited. Advice given to youths in the setting of the Church's activities can well lay stress upon other values than financial success. Many badly needed workers in occupations that offer a career of service, regardless of economic compensation, can well be recruited, if the opportunities for

such jobs to contribute to socially useful goals and the possibilities for a future of enduring satisfactions are well presented.

There needs to be continuous and close rapport between the churches and representative community groups. The opportunity for services, which should be freely given when the invitation is offered, will grow out of many factors, including full knowledge of the situation and acceptance by the groups concerned.

The churches which desire to develop understanding of the problems of manpower and employment should make as full use of existing community organizations and machinery as possible. Experts as individuals and members of community organizations which are concerned with workers and their work will ordinarily be available to share information with church groups that seek it. A community organization of church people and other civic groups with its ear to the ground can serve as a ready machine to undertake fact-finding for the community when a crisis impends.

Community-wide forums, seminars, and face-to-face study groups are also cooperative endeavors which help the churches to bring their social creed before their members and the public and to work out ways to put their creed into effective action in building a good community.

GROUP A-II. Distribution of Abundance

From the Christian standpoint, a minimum goal for the distribution of abundance is the right of all persons to a reasonable level of living, including food, shelter, clothing, health care, and access to cultural interests; and the opportunity through the economic processes for people to earn the full fruit of their labor without unfair encroachment by others.

The mere production of goods is not enough unless it can create a sense of meaningful participation among those who are producing. And, until the opportunity to earn can be obtained by all, there remains for the Christian the need to implement his feeling of compassion for those who do not share equitably in the abundance. The programs of sharing and of full opportunity must seek to eliminate the sacrifice of values in family living resulting from the necessity for mothers to work, or for fathers to work double shifts, or for children to be denied proper educational opportunity in order to contribute to the needs of the family.

Within Abundance, Want Still Exists

We must recognize that within this abundance, because of a lack of proper distribution, want still exists. It exists both in geographical areas and for certain groups within areas of relative prosperity. The Christian conscience says that the values derived from the roots and ties of home, family, and community relations call for economic readjustments for areas of poverty that look beyond the mere moving of the underemployed and the unemployed to other geographic areas altogether. They suggest instead rehabilitating within the area the opportunities for full employment. Legislation already exists to help with this in the Employment Act of 1946. It remains for Christians to exert pressure to have the provisions of the law put to complete use.

We recognize that the agricultural sector of our economy has failed in recent years to share in our present prosperity. As a nation we must develop sound and workable plans to provide a fair share for agriculture in exchange for its abundant provision of food and fiber. We regret the frequent reference to this abundance as a "surplus" to be destroyed, rather than recognition of our Christian opportunity and obligation to share our plenty with those less fortunate. Our Christian conscience is distressed by the thought that we must reduce production rather than develop plans which would increase consumption at home and share our abundance abroad. Increased consumption of our abundance abroad requires willingness on our part to purchase products which other nations can produce. This means Christian reconsideration of present policies regarding export and import.

Where poverty exists within areas of prosperity, a frequent cause is discrimination. This is a moral concern, and the Church must seek to eliminate discrimination because of race or national origin. It must seek more adequate health services, provision of educational opportunity, and development within the minorities of the ability to accept the responsibilities which will be won by removal of discrimination.

Undoubtedly the same principle must be used at home which is proposed for use abroad, namely, that the elements of self-help can be developed among the disadvantaged classes. Mutual organizations such as cooperatives and credit unions can be developed. Churches should encourage these organizations to continue or institute programs to help those who need help. Since many of the members of these mutual organizations are members of churches, the churches can assist in the process by pricking their consciences.

The fair distribution of the abundance which tends to eliminate poverty is the responsibility of the total society; so also is care of the poverty-stricken. And these are responsibilities shared by the Church through each local congregation. The Church has a further responsibility in the distribution of abundance to minister to pockets of poverty through its own charities and by the stimulation of community agencies, both those inside as well as outside the tax structure.

Social Legislation as Aid to Sharing

Social legislation, much of it born of the depression of the thirties, has been continued and is responsible for some of the sharing of abundance. We have achieved greater equality of income through such measures as raising the legal minimum wage; increasing retirement income under social security; unemployment insurance; benefits as well as care for the handicapped, widows, and dependent children; other forms of public assistance to the needy; progressive taxation of income; and the gradual development of programs to raise the incomes of low-income families. This legislation has helped to establish a floor below which those who are now covered cannot sink in their time of adversity. Greater equality in the sharing of growing abundance has also resulted from the processes of collective bargaining.

We want an economy which produces full employment as continuously as possible while at the same time it is dynamic and expanding. For those caught in spells of unemployment, we urge that unemployment compensation programs be re-examined and modernized to reflect changes in wage levels. Supplemental unemployment payments may help both to regularize employment and to encourage such modernization of unemployment compensation.

We are heartened by the demonstration during the past years that as a nation we are increasingly able to expand our economy without the losses and injustices of price inflation. We believe that tax policy, public expenditure, and credit policy must be adjusted quickly and administered wisely by our national government in order that we avoid the twin dangers of depression or price inflation while developing a growing economy.

While in the past public works programs have helped in the spread of purchasing power, which in turn helped the wheels of production to get into operation, Christians recognize that there is now even more public spending helping to stimulate the economic machine. Much of this is now war-related spending to pay for past, present, and future possible wars, whether at home or abroad.

Concern for Both "How" and "How Much" of Military Spending

The Christian conscience recognizes that this is not a sound basis for our shared abundance. Christians should exercise the right to help to formulate opinion on *how* military money should be spent as well as *how much* should be spent. This "defense" money should not be spent to foster policies in other nations from which our forefathers saw fit to protect us. Some nations have found it possible to foster colonialism and economic slavery by the support we have given them in the name of our mutual defense.

Furthermore, as Christians we recognize that the security of America can be built more effectively through the development of economic resources in other nations, than by the building of military bases and the equipping of indigenous armies. Accordingly, our conscience says that it is disproportionate to be spending at a ratio of 100 to 1 for the machines of war as compared with the economic development of our friends abroad. The Good Samaritan's road is no longer simply from Jerusalem to Jericho but also extends from Washington to Tokyo.

Military spending has a way of maintaining its own momentum. There is a latent fear that the reduction of military spending will mean a general depression and a reduction in the share of our abundance which is now being received by a vast majority of the people.*

It is a task of the Christian Church to help to develop an international situation which would make possible marked reduction of military spending and the waging of peace instead of "hot" or "cold" war. This spending could then be replaced by public and private civilian expenditures to share more widely the abundance which has been created within the

* See Resolution following this report.

nation. The churches should also urge that this military spending be replaced partly by spending abroad to assist other nations to develop economic systems which would allow them to create for themselves an abundance such as we now enjoy. Some of this would be spent in the establishment of educational systems to help develop indigenous leaders and technicians. Some would be spent to give immediate assistance to health programs.

True abundance cannot be built by imprudent expenditures either civilian or military. Hence the task of the Church is to assist in the vigilance against waste.

Tasks of the Church and of Christians

It remains the task of the Church to create a public opinion which would encourage more expenditure for other purposes than military defense.

As Christians we cannot escape the fact that the sharing of abundance is not enough unless it changes the quality of the lives sharing it. As man does not live by bread alone, so a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses. At home and abroad, there must be shared, along with the abundance, the knowledge of the saving love of God in Christ Jesus who came that all might have life and have it more abundantly.

RESOLUTION FROM GROUP A-II

(On recommendation of officers of the Discussion Group the plenary session voted to authorize the Group to attach this resolution to its Report.)

We as Christians living in America confess our deep involvement in the military program of our nation as recipients of the income it sustains.

As taxpayers who support the program with the fruits of our labors, and as human beings—fellow citizens who share in the community of guilt that our trust in arms involves, we act on our fears, rather than our Christian faith in the power of love.

These honest doubts about the war machinery support the Christian view expressed by the sentiment of Abraham Lincoln—the best way to destroy your enemy is to make him your friend. We observe many current evidences that our military expenditure has not won us friends in Asia, Africa, or Europe. Too often our military aid causes us to support colonialism, economic feudalism, and human exploitation.

The Christian gospel of love calls us to an affirmative expression of our faith. We urge the churches and individual Christians to witness before our nation to that faith.

Specifically we would wage peace:

1. By letting our Christian conscience stir us to more extensive support for present programs as exemplified in missions, in health, education, technical assistance both denominationally and ecumenically, and as represented by Church World Service and CROP.

2. Through full and generous support of such agencies as the Special United Nations Economic Fund for Economic Development (SUNFED), Technical Assistance Office of the UN, FAO, WHO, UNESCO, and UNICEF.

GROUP A-III. Selling and Consumption

A Christian approach to material things starts with the acknowledgment that "the Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." God, the Creator, has made abundant provision to satisfy human needs by the natural resources over which He has given man specific responsibility and stewardship. These resources are to be used to glorify God and to serve people everywhere.

Jesus emphasized by his life, teachings, and death the need to sacrifice for others and the supreme value of love of God and man. The Christian conscience is not satisfied by anything less than a full acceptance and experience of this ethic. In a society of abundance the Christian is faced with a stern imperative to share sacrificially with others, especially those anywhere who are in need.

There are many factors in the abundant society in which the people of the United States live which create for Christians great responsibilities. This report attempts to deal with some of them.

For more than a century, the per capita income of the United States has doubled about every 35 years. Although poverty still exists among a minority of our people, as a nation we have reached an unprecedented level of material prosperity. We may reasonably expect the national income to continue to double about every 35 years, and what is abundance now will become super-abundance in the future. This prospect creates both opportunities and temptations for the American people.

Close Connection Between Economics and Religion

The way in which a people use their national income is a reflection of their way of life. Economic goods are involved in every aspect of life from the cradle to the grave. At birth we require the services of obstetricians and diapers. At death, we require insurance and coffins. Throughout life, our nourishment, our homes, our recreations, and our national defense all require economic goods. Even churches need buildings, clergymen, pipe organs, and hymn books, and our benevolences are usually offered in the form of money. Indeed, we recognize the connection between economics and religion by including the offering as a standard and indispensable part of the ritual of worship. Clearly, the character and quality of our lives are written in our check stubs. Our decisions as consumers are decisions about our way of life. These decisions are therefore freighted with ethical and spiritual significance. It is not possible to separate the economic and the religious aspects of our lives.

As we live in a nation of great opulence, we become the stewards of a rich patrimony. Our problem is, if possible, to use these great riches to achieve the good life for ourselves and for our neighbors. Economic goods

are not a worthy end in themselves. They are a means to ultimate ends. Too often in modern America we assume that economic progress is an end in itself, and we fail to ask ourselves whether, or how, the multiplication of economic goods will lead to the enhancement of fundamental human values. The basic question is: "Production for what?"

Uses of Our Productive Power

There are seven possible uses of our national productive power: (1) to achieve greater leisure; (2) for national defense; (3) for investment in buildings, machinery, productive equipment, and scientific research; (4) for social welfare activities of government, e.g., education, health services, protection, resource development, roads, etc.; (5) for activities of voluntary groups such as churches, private schools, private hospitals, and social service agencies; (6) to help our neighbors abroad and to seek world peace; (7) for private consumption: food, clothing, shelter, recreation, etc.

The problem in achieving a good use of our abundance is partly to allocate it wisely among these seven uses, and partly to allocate it wisely within each use. The decisions are made by us in our roles as consumers, as citizens, and as members of voluntary groups. As Christians, we should try to make decisions that are consistent with our basic ethical principles.

There is no clear and direct relationship between the amount of economic goods at our disposal and the degree to which we achieve the good life. Abject poverty, involving lack of the absolute necessities of life, obviously stunts human personality. But once the absolute necessities have been obtained, poverty becomes a relative concept. As our nation grows richer, we set our standards higher. We believe that each family needs more and more income to live in comfort and decency. Nevertheless, whatever our definition of poverty may be, there is no necessary virtue in poverty. Poverty often leads to undesirable preoccupation with material things, and inhibits the highest spiritual and moral development of the person. On the other hand, abundance does not assure, and may prevent, the highest development of the human personality. Those living in abundance are subject to the constant temptation of over-concern with material possessions and creature comforts. The ideal is to eliminate poverty and to use our abundance as Christian stewards.

It is likely that the character of our private consumption today—which includes so much luxury, speed, excitement, over-indulgence, and trivia—may detract from the achievement of our highest goals. Our lives seem overly-cluttered with things. And it is by no means evident that the prospective doubling or redoubling of our private consumption will necessarily produce important benefits for the majority of our people. It is time for us to consider carefully both the opportunities and dangers presented by our burgeoning wealth.

We live in an expanding economy. If we are to avoid serious unemployment in such an economy, there must be a continuous growth. The frequent changes of models and styles, the unrelenting efforts to promote sales, and the steady easing of consumer credit all suggest that demand tends to lag behind productive capacity. It seems that we are required to

consume great quantities of goods, whether we need them or not, just to keep the economic machinery going. We must learn to harness our productive power for Christian ends, and avoid the temptation to consume great quantities of useless goods merely to keep the engine going.

Values of Increased Leisure, Services, and Aid

Assuming that there is a limit to the amount of goods for private consumption which people can use to advantage, other ways of using the product of our economy must be found. The three most promising possibilities are increased leisure, increased production of various social services, and increased aid to other peoples.

(a) The possible advantages flowing from increased leisure are attractive. Such leisure might take the form of shorter hours, longer vacations, earlier retirement, more married women at home, and more young people in school. Leisure presents many opportunities for better home life, for wider participation in political and community activities, for reduction in the tempo and pressure of modern existence, for improved education, and for contemplative pursuits. However, leisure is not an unalloyed blessing. There are many values in *work*, and there are many dangers and temptations in leisure not well used.

(b) Another fruitful use of our productive power is to increase the amount of our resources devoted to social welfare services of all kinds: religious organizations, education at all levels, housing, beautification of our cities and countryside, cleaning up of our rivers and lakes, construction of hospitals and institutions, medical research, the care of the underprivileged, the advancement of the arts, and the conservation of our natural resources. In these areas there is virtually no limit to the amount of productive power that could be used to advantage. As a result of billions spent in this way, we might achieve a level of civilization and a quality of life beyond our most sanguine dreams. The same billions spent for luxuries and gadgets might actually detract from, rather than enhance, the quality of our lives.

(c) Another important use of our productive power would be to spend much more to provide opportunities for our less fortunate neighbors abroad and to wage peace.

To increase the expenditures for social welfare and for foreign aid would require an expansion of the activities of government and of voluntary private organizations. More of our money would be spent collectively, through taxation and voluntary contributions, and less would be spent privately. This presents a problem in that there are dangers in increasing the scope and power of government. Many believe that the emphasis should be on *private voluntary organizations* rather than government. In this case, tithing could take on new importance. Yet, realistically, any program such as suggested here would necessarily require increased scope for government. This would remind us of the responsibility of Christians to participate in government and to bring to it the Christian point of view.

Families Need to Improve the Quality of Consumption

Individuals have great opportunities to improve the quality of their private consumption, to the end that this consumption may help them achieve ultimate values more fully. Families of any income class vary widely in the quality of their consumption, according to the character of their values and the astuteness of their home management. This suggests the need for consumer education with reference both to the values sought and to the means of achieving these values. The churches should provide leadership and education to consumers—by helping to clarify goals and by helping in the problems of budgeting, buymanship, and long-range financial planning. The church should also speak out on abuses which sometimes affect consumers, such as burdening individuals with excessive consumer credit, misleading salesmanship, appeal of advertisers to unworthy values, etc. Generally, desirable consumption patterns should be achieved through education of consumers and appeal to the social responsibilities of businessmen rather than through legislation. However, some legislation is necessary, such, for example, as pure food and drug laws. Greater emphasis on education, informed by Christian values, would help to maintain the freedom of consumer choice—one of the significant freedoms of our society. This freedom, like all others, involves the freedom to make mistakes.

The pattern of consumption followed by a family affects not only that family but also its neighbors as well. For example, a new fur coat may give rise to envy on the part of friends, consumption of liquor before driving may endanger other motorists, unnecessary automobile trips may contribute to highway congestion, the building of an ugly house may impair the beauty of a neighborhood, the sound of radios late at night may disturb neighbors, etc. Perhaps the cardinal sin of consumers is to buy goods for the purpose of setting themselves above others and of exciting the envy of others. It is worse to make the Joneses keep up with us than for us to try to keep up with the Joneses.

Consumers, in selecting particular brands and particular sources of supply, would be well-advised to choose firms with desirable labor practices, without race discrimination, and with high standards of citizenship. However, Christians should exercise great care in withholding patronage, and in doing so should avoid discriminating against business firms on grounds of religion, race, or honest political conviction.

GROUP A-IV. Relations of Economic Power Groups

It is necessary that any strategy and insights we have as Christians be based upon facts and not assumptions. It is quite evident that many of the assumptions with reference to the size, complexity, and power of power groups, both public and private, need to be factually examined. There is a danger that the Christian conscience will be awakened to the power scene of the 1890s and be confused about the realities of the power grouping of today.

In the last hundred years the rise in size and complexity of organiza-

tions has been without parallel in any period of human history. Few activities of man are exempt. Nevertheless it is doubtful whether, in view of the increase in size of population and the massive increase in the size of our economy, these organizations are relatively larger than they were, say, in the 1890s.

Relations of Size to Degree of Power

The easy assumption that size automatically means power needs to be challenged. In our competitive society there are already so many built-in controls of a competitive nature that all organizations find their power challenged and many large groups find themselves challenged by equally large groups.

In looking at what we are considering as economic power groups, we should be reminded that there are internal limitations to every organization. The situation here is analogous to that in the world of organisms. For instance, an insect can only be at the most three inches long. A mammal can be as large as a whale if it continues to live in water. An elephant cannot be of any larger size or else its legs would be as large as its body. What we are trying to say is that there is no inherent evil in size and that, in the very nature of things, size brings with it its own limitations.

The danger of easy but inaccurate assumptions as to the size and power of power groups is that our attention may be diverted from power groupings which, although they exercise tremendous influence in society, are not popularly challenged. For instance, while the Christian conscience is apt to view with alarm the rise in size of corporations, labor groups, and political pressure groups, it is possible that more of our attention should be turned to the potential power of the Pentagon and the place of the military as a power group.

Policy-Making Process of Pivotal Importance

The Christian community should of course be concerned with the size, the limitations, and the strength of power groups, but it should also be tremendously concerned with the processes by which policies are made in those groups. The Christian conscience of those within the power groups who make the decisions is a matter of pivotal importance. Also the opportunity for those not in positions of authority to make their influence felt in the policy processes of these groups is a matter of grave concern.

The Christian is a responsible person. As a member of a group his sense of responsibility is of great importance. He must as a responsible person attend the meetings of his group, participate as far as he possibly can in its policy processes, know the facts about the operation of his group, and try to see that his group's aims, motives, and methods conform to the Christian ethics.

The average person in our American society is a member of a group of potential power. All of us are consumers. We may not be organized as such, but all our decisions as consumers in our day-to-day buying are, to those involved in production, decisions of a power group whose preferences are paramount in the making of the policies of producers.

A group, be it a power group or a group not usually considered as a power group, is made up of people. What are our responsibilities to people of the group to which we belong either formally or informally? How is our conscience activated and how are our convictions expressed? Does the nature of the group make it difficult or easy for individuals to take mature responsibility in the group and to express their convictions? Is the group dominated by a minority or is there ample opportunity for democratic processes?

What are the actualities of the relation of power groups to each other? For instance, the Church, or shall we say the Christian community, is understandably concerned about the relationship of management and labor. Care should be exercised, however, in evaluating the conflicts in this situation in terms of historical perspective and of the number of people involved. It would appear that, distressing as these conflicts are, their number, in proportion to the groups and the individuals involved in production, is relatively small and over a period of time has become smaller. Perhaps we should be more concerned with the power struggles between these groups, although, of course, the power struggle between labor and management is always of concern to the Christian community.*

We would point out that the attention given to the conspicuous examples of power collision, say between labor and management, should not obscure the massive fact of the high degree of wholesome cooperation between management and labor in terms of community welfare. The fact that labor and management can work together for the common good, that competing corporations can cooperate for the welfare of society, and that our whole American scene presents many examples of supposedly hostile groups cooperating for the welfare of society should point out to us that hostility is not inherent but that cooperation is always possible.

Ethical Concern Increasing Among Power Groups

The Christian community in viewing the power grouping of America should give mature consideration to the effective ethical behavior or idealism already at work within the power groups. The stereotypes of big management as robber barons and of labor leaders as power-mad demagogues is an unrealistic, immature, and inadequate conception of the actualities of today. There has come through some process or other an increase in the serious ethical concerns of the great power groups. This is in no small measure the product of the Christian teaching and heritage as it has been guarded and propagated by the Christian Church.

We would impress upon the Christian community the need for vigilance without nagging, and the necessity on the part of the Christian conscience to know the facts and to be ready to give some workable and constructive

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* There was considerable discussion at two sessions of the group on the matter of union practices and compulsory union membership and of the arguments for and against state "right-to-work" laws. Space does not justify a review of the various arguments. There were many more persons who spoke in opposition to such laws than in favor of them. But no consensus of opinion among members of the group as a whole was formulated. We note with interest that this subject is currently being considered by the Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. upon reference from its Department of the Church and Economic Life.

answers. Our prophetic role is not that of acting as an outraged outsider but as a group which is identified in all levels with the people that make up the power groups. We cannot speak of the corporations as "those large corporations" without honestly remembering that their stockholders, their management, and their workers are made up of people, a great many of whom are members of Christian churches and practically all of whom come constantly under the influence of the Christian climate. When we speak of power groups we are actually speaking of people most of whom are our own Christian people. In other words, we of the Church do not stand outside of these power groupings; we stand within them. Their mistakes are matters for *our* penitence.

A grave question has begun to haunt the conscience of the Christian community. It is this: Is the government the one power grouping through which every one can express their convictions and concerns? This is a debatable point. We would challenge the rather easy assumption that the government is always responsive to the convictions and concerns of the average individual. Without in any way pronouncing upon the role of government in its position as the overarching group, we would point out that the government, like any other power group, has its limitations due to size and complexity of organization and has, as well, limitations springing from the strength of other organizations. Merely to assign to the government an increasing power role is too easy an answer and is perhaps the wrong answer. Every assignment of increasing power to the government should be accompanied by increasing safeguards of governmental process, to avoid the danger of the rise of the government to the position of the one unassailable power group.

Response of Government to Economic Groupings

The response of government today to power groupings or alleged power groupings needs to come under the severe scrutiny of the Christian conscience. For instance, the whole field of farm policy needs re-examination in the light of the Christian ethic. Present farm policy needs to be scrutinized from the point of view of the economic facts of farming as a vocation in our contemporary society. Our farm policy, as it exists, and alternate farm policies proposed are all based upon a desire to do something for the farmers as a group. We suggest the need of historical perspective in this matter.

Since the time of the American Revolution there has been a progressive reduction in the percentage of the population directly engaged in agriculture. At the time of the American Revolution it took 17 farmers to feed 18 people. Today it takes less than 15% of our working force to feed all the rest of us and with a lot left over. Must we not take care that our farm policy avoid freezing the farm labor force at its present percentage? Alternately, must we not avoid policies which reduce the number of family farmers by the harsh process of financial bankruptcy?

Further, should we not examine farm policy on the basis of its adequacy in helping the hard core of farmers on the smaller, non-mechanized, low-income farms? Are we in danger that, in trying to serve the interests of the whole farm group, the interests of the privileged may take priority

over the interests of those less privileged? We raise these questions as an illustration of the new look which we should take at our government as a power group.

The Christian Community as a Power Group

Finally we would turn the light upon our own Christian community as a power group. As a matter of political fact the power of the Church is thought by practical practitioners of the art of government to be greater than that of any other power group in America. Whether this is true or not can be debated. But it is quite evident that with the widespread growth of the Church in America the prestige and power of the Church cannot be safely ignored by those who make government policy. This lays a heavy burden on us. Perhaps, while we subject all of the power groupings in America to the scrutiny of the Christian conscience, we should submit *ourselves* to the most severe scrutiny. How are we in the Christian church using our power and prestige? How should we use it? This presents many practical problems which it is not within the purview of this report to detail. We remind ourselves, however, very simply and very humbly that we had better not be self-righteous about our position. Perhaps even we of the Church might well be reminded of Our Blessed Lord's story of the man with the beam in his own eye trying to cast out the mote in the eye of another!

GROUP A-V. Foreign Economic Policy

Basis and Nature of Christian Concern

Christians in the United States who are beneficiaries of abundance have an overwhelming responsibility to encourage their country to contribute to the improvement of the economic well-being of other nations. It is morally intolerable to live as a rich nation, in a world that is still for the most part economically poor, without doing what is possible to help the people of other countries to raise their standards of living. There are hundreds of millions of people in the nations which have recently gained political independence and in other economically underdeveloped countries who are resolved to find their way to a better economic future. We believe that God wills their full and free participation as our neighbors in the world community. We are thankful that they now can express their opposition to foreign domination, that they now have a vision of justice, freedom, and well-being for themselves. All that we can do as individuals, as citizens, as churchmen to aid their economies should be done in cooperation with them.

We must distinguish between the role of the government and that of the Church. Christian citizens should be controlled by God's love revealed in Christ for all mankind, remembering his special concern for the weak and the poor, for the victims of man's greed and neglect. As citizens they work through their government and in doing so they must recognize its special responsibilities. The government is a trustee for the nation as a whole whose people have varied motives and convictions. It should be

expected to base its policy chiefly on a broad view of the nation's interest. The Church and Christians as citizens should help the nation and its government to realize that American national interest is in truth closely bound up with the real welfare of other countries.

Christian citizens, in working with their government, should put major emphasis on the wide area of mutual problems and interests which we share with other nations. We are united with them by a common concern for peace, for freedom from political tyranny, and for well-being. The raising of the standards of living of economically underdeveloped countries is beneficial to us all economically and politically.

Emphasis on these interests as being held in common should prevent us from expecting gratitude for generosity; and it should prevent others from assuming that American policies of economic aid depend upon our desire to use them for our own national purposes. We should not insist on immediate political benefits to the United States in each case. We should not treat any nations as satellites or judge them by their willingness to join with us in defensive military alliances. We should seek to cooperate with them to develop economic, political, and social health which will be a part of the health of the free world, and we should hope to extend the area of the free world by peaceful means. When a nation preserves its own freedom from totalitarian domination, that is itself a great contribution to the strength of all free nations. Respect for other nations and for their independence is essential if our policy is to serve their interests or our own.

The churches in the United States are a part of the world-wide Church of Christ and they should see that all national interests stand under the judgment of God and that no interest has an exclusive claim upon them. They should strengthen among Christian policy makers and other citizens concern for the needs and the aspirations of other nations. In so doing they serve those mutual interests on which national policy should be based. The churches should correct among their members preoccupation with the special interests of one region, or one segment of our economy, or one industry which often leads citizens of the United States to have narrow and short-sighted views of the national interest. When a wise national policy calls for some sacrifice by its citizens in the form of taxes, or other economic costs, the churches should help their members to accept such sacrifice willingly and to realize that often what they still possess makes the very word sacrifice seem inappropriate. National policies based upon mutual interests call, in their implementation, for personnel who are humble and understanding in their relation to the people of other nations, who respect their dignity and care for their welfare. The churches can do much to help their members accept positions abroad in connection with public or private agencies with a sense of Christian vocation.

Problems of Economic Development

The economic development of economically underdeveloped countries is a problem of paramount importance today. The people in these countries have become aware that their grinding poverty is not a necessary part of the natural order as they once believed, and they are determined

to start on the road to abundance. We dare not fail them in this quest.

The problems of economic development are complex and perplexing, and the obstacles to it great and deep-seated. Countries are poor for many reasons. Lack of resources is frequently the easiest obstacle to deal with. Problems due to cultural patterns and political instability are more difficult to assess as well as to overcome. Lack of widespread educational opportunity, debilitating diseases, deep-seated distrust of commercial activities, unwillingness to dirty one's hands in a laboratory or factory are some of the greatest obstacles to economic development. To overcome them requires changes in social habits and cultural patterns, and no quick results can be expected either by the underdeveloped country or by us.

Economic development requires capital formation, which means using resources to produce for future rather than immediate consumption. The very poverty of underdeveloped countries keeps their savings low. Foreign capital—both private and public—can be helpful in two important ways. It adds to the total of resources and it provides particular scarce complementary resources. Americans should be sympathetic to this function of foreign capital since we ourselves benefited originally from foreign capital.

The capacity of many underdeveloped countries to absorb foreign capital is small. Some like India have an effective, honest civil service and a sizable nucleus of private managerial and administrative talent. In some others even the minimum personnel necessary to make effective use of more foreign capital is missing. In many countries population increase will absorb most of the results of increased production with little or no improvement in the standard of living.

Present capacity to absorb foreign capital is difficult to measure, but it is limited. This, however, does not excuse us from doing our share. It is certain that countries can use substantially more than they are getting now, and that their capacity to use additional capital will grow. The obstacles to economic development are formidable, but they can be overcome with patience, knowledge, and love.

Technical aid in the narrow sense is also essential. To be effective it must be carried out by dedicated people over a sufficiently long period of time. Ultimate success or failure depends also on whether necessary institutions and attitudes can be developed by the countries themselves, and whether the necessary capital is forthcoming. If these other requirements are lacking, the end results will be frustration and resentment.

Program of Action

Complex problems cannot have simple solutions. As Christians as well as American citizens we wish to see other countries develop economically and to bring about those peaceful changes necessary for improving living standards under conditions of growing justice and freedom. To do so, we must use every legitimate means at our command. We need action by individuals, by business enterprise, by churches and other voluntary agencies, and by the government.

Our churches have long experience abroad in education, in establishing

hospitals, in rural reconstruction, and so on. Private business is increasingly aware that the setting up of productive enterprises in a foreign country requires not only capital and technical know-how but also a sense of social responsibility towards the people of that country. We feel strongly that as much as possible should be done by Christians through the agencies of their churches seeking to make more effective the world-wide Christian mission. As individuals Christians can work also through the activities of private business and voluntary agencies. Citizens of this country traveling, living, or working abroad—including military personnel—should recognize and be helped to recognize the opportunities they have to act as ambassadors of good will.

At the same time, action by the United States government has become imperative. Many of the problems involved in promoting development abroad demand such action by their very nature and scale.

We recognize that much good work has been undertaken and accomplished by our own government and by the United Nations and its specialized agencies and by other governments. Nevertheless the fact remains that, up to the present time, the pace of economic development in the underdeveloped countries has been tragically slow in many places and that, to meet at all adequately the requirements of this period of history, a large new program must be launched. Our government should take primary initiative, supported by the citizenry in a bipartisan manner and reinforced by the Christian conscience among our people.

Essential features of this program are:

(a) Substantially more investment capital should be made available by the United States government for economic development abroad. The sum to be disbursed should be fixed in the light of the absorptive capacity of the underdeveloped countries. It is conceivable that this capacity may rise in the near future to $3 to $5 billion a year, a figure well within the capability of our economy which at present produces a gross national product of $400 billion a year. It should be realized, however, that there are domestic claims on available resources, and that even such a small fraction of our total product spent for economic development abroad means some sacrifice.

(b) Development funds should be made available without military or political strings. Reasonable economic conditions for our assistance, however, designed to assure efficient use of funds made available are necessary. Countries desiring assistance should be required to present a reasonable program of development and to show evidence that the necessary managerial and administrative talent can be secured.

(c) The program should be recognized as a distinct part of our international relations, resting upon its own solid merits, and separated administratively and otherwise from military programs.

(d) The program should be put on a continuing and long-range basis. Continuity in policies, in personnel, and in funds available is essential.

(e) The program should in our opinion preferably be administered through an international agency under the aegis of the United Nations.

Because economic development implies membership in a world economy, we emphasize the need for a trade policy of the United States that will be consistent with and contributory to the expansion of trade so essential in accomplishing the objectives we have discussed. We endorse the report of the last National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order and its recommendations regarding the liberalization of tariffs. Means other than the raising of rates are available and should be used to offset damage which may result from changing of tariffs. We favor membership by the United States in the Organization for Trade Cooperation.

"We Can Help"

We feel that a fitting conclusion to this Report is contained in the following quotation from a recent address by President Eisenhower:

"And since we have been favored by the system that our forefathers gave us, by the resources that God gave us, by the good fortune we have of having been born and raised here through the finest educational and health systems in the world, let us use our brains to make certain we sustain our position by helping everybody else to realize their own aspirations and legitimate ambitions, not necessarily in the exact pattern of this country. . . .

"We can preach and show that we believe in the dignity of man, in the independence of nations, the right of people to determine for themselves their own faith. We can help. Every dollar we put into this kind of thing, if it is intelligently spent, is to my mind, in the long run, worth any five we put just in sheer defense, because in the long run it is a constructive thing. It is a developing thing, the kind of development America has done at home and which we must help do abroad."

RESOLUTIONS FROM GROUP A-V

(The Plenary Session voted to refer these resolutions to the National Council's Department of International Affairs for immediate consideration and action.)

The Third National Study Conference on The Church and Economic Life urgently calls upon the churches to support the enactment of legislation by the Congress of the United States:

1. Embodying the program of foreign economic aid contained in President Eisenhower's Message to Congress on March 19th, including provisions for continuity and flexibility.

2. Approving United States membership in the Organization for Trade Cooperation.

* * * *

The Third National Study Conference on The Church and Economic Life expresses the conviction to the churches that in addition to the encouragement of private investment, substantially larger sums of investment capital from public sources should be made available for the development of economically underdeveloped countries; and urges that the United States government take the initiative in setting up and carrying through an expanded program of such a character. It is the opinion of the Conference that a major part of this program preferably should be administered through an international agency, or agencies, now under or to be established under the aegis of the United Nations. Financial contributions from the United States and other member countries should be large enough to permit continuity of policy and operations for a period of several years. To the extent that this expanded program is conducted directly by the United States it should have assurance of continuity and flexibility, should be administered separately from military programs, should make reasonable economic conditions to be met by recipient countries but be free from military or political requirements on their part.

GROUP A-VI. Conservation of Natural Resources

Christian Bases for Resource Conservation

The Christian motivation for conservation of natural resources arises from our Christian doctrines of Creation, Love, and Redemption.

A. *Creation.* God, according to the Christian view, is the Creator of the earth and all its elements and parts. Man is also a part of divine creation, a child of God, ordained to have dominion over the earth and to participate in the continuing creative processes of nature. From the doctrine of creation flows the Christian teaching of stewardship which defines man's relation to natural resources as that of a trustee. This trusteeship imposes a duty to conserve, develop, and use resources in ways which glorify God. "The earth is the Lord's."

B. *Love.* Love for one's neighbor is the highest social teaching of Christianity and the basis of the Christian idea of community. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This teaching, translated into respect for the rights and welfare of others and concern for social justice, provides a further Christian basis for conservation and wise use of natural resources. We must use resources wisely because they are the indispensable basis of the material abundance which can continue to support the good life for this generation of Americans, for future generations of Americans, and for an ever-widening circle of our human brethren in other countries both now and in the future.

C. *Redemption.* For many Christians, the drama of redemption as unfolded in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ adds further meaning to the conservation of natural resources. Nature, in this Christian view, is seen as the theatre of the Incarnation. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." This means that God the Creator has related himself anew to our world as God the Redeemer. By this divine event God gave all

physical reality a special sacramental character which requires of the Christian a profound reverence for all physical creation. Just as the Apostle Paul has called upon Christians to present their bodies "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God . . ." so man's use of and enjoyment of nature is the economic face of his worship. Abuse of natural resources, in this view, becomes an act of blasphemy.

Conservation as Resource Management

These basic Christian considerations point toward recognition that conservation of natural resources finds its ethical significance in their development and use as well as in their preservation. While protection and preservation of presently available resources for future use may on occasion be sound conservation, mere hoarding has no justification.

Conservation comes to be seen as an aspect of "economizing" or managing natural resources. To be in favor of conservation is to be in favor of careful, thoughtful, and "good" management of natural resources as distinct from careless, thoughtless, wasteful management.

People who will oppose conservation understood in these broad terms are difficult to find. The problem which confronts the Christian conscience is not whether to favor or oppose conservation. The problem is to make the many and frequent specific choices among alternative uses of resources. We face these choices both in our capacities as private owners and as responsible citizens.

Conservation is not an absolute term and does not indicate definitive courses of action. Christian advocates of conservation may differ widely on the application of conservation in particular cases. The meaning of conservation takes shape and substance only in relation to particular problems arising in specific situations. Ethical as well as economic problems arise at the point where the Christian faces particular decisions regarding the management of natural resources.

This understanding of the conservation problem as it confronts the Christian conscience will be clarified by illustration of the types of choices which characteristically face us as stewards of natural resources:

A. Toward which of several valuable uses shall we develop a given resource?

   E.g. Shall we use this forest for recreation, for lumber for building purposes, or for pulpwood?

   Shall we use scarce chrome for automobile trim, or for the manufacture of special types of steel?

B. How shall we allocate a scarce resource as between present and future uses?

   E.g. Shall we sacrifice presently larger agricultural crops in order to rehabilitate our soil and enjoy larger rather than smaller crops in the future?

Shall we use natural gas under industrial boilers in the present or preserve it for the housewife's kitchen range in the future? (This problem becomes especially acute in the case of nonrenewable resources.)

C. How shall we arrive at decision in each case with respect to the alternative possibilities just previously cited?
   1. By the free actions of individuals and individual corporations, meshed together in the market?
   2. Or by group action on a voluntary, cooperative basis?
   3. Or by group action using the instrumentality of government?
   4. Or by what combination of these methods?

D. In so far as governmental action is involved, further choices emerge, involving:
   1. The level of governmental action (local, state, federal)
   2. The extent of governmental action (complete or partial)
   3. The type of governmental action (regulatory, incentive, or public ownership)

   (It should be emphasized that government decisions are also *our* decisions because we are the government.)

General Considerations

The challenge of conservation comes to the Christian conscience in no small part because of our recognition that the generations before us and our own generation have been guilty of serious exploitation of earth's resources. Human selfishness and greed have been the cause in many instances of exploitation and waste. Other causes have been ignorance of sound conservation principles and methods; indifference bred of what seemed to be an inexhaustible supply; the competitive pressures of a dynamic free-enterprise economy; governmental graft and corruption.

Despite its amazing record of productive achievement, and indeed to some extent as a function of its productivity, the free enterprise system has shown a serious tendency to be careless of natural resources. Farm and range land, forests and wild life, water supplies and nonrenewable mineral resources have frequently been exploited and depleted at excessive rates under the pressures of competition and profit-seeking.

Recognition of this problem in recent decades has brought improvement in many areas of resource use. Some of these improvements have resulted from increasing self-discipline on the part of resource owners; some have come as the result of governmental action designed to protect the long-range social interest in natural resources.

In recent days a new temptation has appeared, dulling some ears to the dangers of resource waste. We are tempted to use natural resources recklessly, lavishly, and for ostentatious display because our technology seems to give promise of providing prompt and ample substitutes for any dwindling resource.

Some Specific Resource Problems

In addition to these general considerations, the following specific suggestions are offered as guides to the sensitive Christian conscience in the area of resource conservation:

A. *Soil Resources.* Soil conservation is both a private and a public concern. The thin top surface of good soil upon which a high level of living for man depends has been built up slowly through the ages by the processes of nature. The utmost emphasis must be given to cooperation with nature to preserve and build up this basic resource. This includes protection and improvement of good soil, and wherever economically feasible, restoration of damaged soil, improvement of low-quality soil, and development as needed of soil presently nonproductive.

Conservation must become a fundamental goal both for all who own and operate farm, timber, or range land, and for local, state, and federal governments. Every farmer, whether owner, tenant, or hired laborer, has the responsibility to discover and to practice to the limits of his power those methods of land use which will conserve, restore, and enrich the fertility of his soil.

Such private efforts must be supplemented by integrated federal and state programs of conservation education and technical assistance. Where necessary to protect the public interest, financial assistance should be extended to aid farmers who inaugurate long-run conservation practices.

Lands presently in the public domain are generally unsuited for cropland use. Except in cases where economic irrigation projects can be developed these lands should generally be retained in public ownership. If leased for range, mining, or crop-land purposes they should be subject to regulation in the interest of conservation.

B. *Water Resources.* Water is of such vital concern to agriculture, industry, and community life, that every effort should be made to safeguard it. Private enterprise should be encouraged to bend every reasonable effort in this direction. Where private effort proves inadequate or unprofitable, it is a legitimate function of government to undertake programs of water conservation, flood control, pollution control, irrigation, reclamation, and the like, when and where they are needed and can be economically and socially justified.

The river basin provides the most natural and efficient unit for programs of water conservation and use. The successful development of watershed resources is of vital concern to the people of our river basins and of the whole nation. Such developments contribute to better levels of living for the people of the basins and provide a sound basis for expansion of productive private enterprise. Wide participation by the citizens of the watershed area is essential to the sound, democratic development of river basin planning. Wherever governmental agencies are involved in such planning, they should be encouraged to integrate and utilize such local effort.

Watershed planning and resource development should include and integrate, as may be appropriate to the region, forestation, soil conservation, flood control, irrigation, municipal water supply, navigation, electric power generation and distribution, wild life conservation, and recreation.

In addition to the values of conservation planning on the major river basins, it is also important that encouragement be given to careful water and soil planning on the smaller watershed tributaries. Such small watershed plans have significant values in themselves and also contribute to sound overall river basin planning.

C. *Mineral and Energy Resources.* Because the location of mineral resources, including oil and natural gas, does not correspond to the needs of population concentrations nor to the political boundaries of nations, any realistic consideration of mineral resource conservation must be in international and world terms. A basic essential of conservation planning is the maintenance by some international agency of a continuous, world-wide inventory of known mineral resources and their use.

Despite current optimistic views regarding world supplies of valuable minerals and energy sources, we believe that caution should govern our programs of development and use. Wasteful practices in the use of nonrenewable mineral resources should be eliminated. Undeveloped hydroelectric sites should be developed as rapidly as is economically feasible. The peaceful uses of atomic energy should be diligently developed. Other potential sources of energy should be fully explored.

Both continuous and increased self-discipline on the part of mineral resource developers and considerable governmental activity may be required to balance dynamic resource development with sound conservation.

D. *Natural Beauty and Wild Life.* In view of the increasing leisure which the era of abundance is making available to multitudes of our people, the conservation of natural scenic beauty and wild life is becoming an increasingly important value in our society. Urbanization, industrialization, and automation all tend to increase men's need for the recreational opportunities associated with outdoor sports and the enjoyment of natural beauty. To meet this need we anticipate substantial increase in private, commercial, and public recreational areas. We urge that all such developments give due regard to the protection of irreplaceable scenic wonders and beauties, the esthetic treatment of natural beauty spots, and the continuous stocking of fish and game preserves. All recreational areas, under whatever type of control and management, should be open to all who desire to use them without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin.

In certain cases, land areas physically or economically unsuitable for agricultural or grazing purposes but accessible to population centers may well be converted to the recreational uses of a growing population with increasing leisure time.

We believe the federal government should retain the ownership and management of those areas which because of unusual grandeur, beauty, or historic significance attract visitors from all sections of the nation.

The Christian conscience must be ever alert to the issues and problems discussed in this report and to many others which will arise in resource conservation, development, and use. We must seek, through the devotional, educational, and social action programs of the churches to encourage discriminating and conscientious concern for resource conservation. These programs should be directed to all resource owners, decision-makers, and consumers. We should also support appropriate governmental action where it proves necessary to protect the national or the total human interest in conservative resource management.

Series B

General Subject: *Responsibilities of the Churches Issuing from the Cultural and Social Implications of Our Economy of Abundance.*

GROUP B-I. Material and Spiritual Values

We are confronted with the capacity to produce more than we can distribute through currently available channels. Thus a crisis has for many individuals appeared as a conflict between material and spiritual values.

Falsity in Separation of Spiritual and Material

Americans are disturbed over our nation's abundance because of our spiritual inheritance and a deeply rooted conviction that spiritual values should be granted priority. By spiritual we mean that order of life which God intends. Opposed to this is placed the term material or materialism. Here is implied a preoccupation with things. To Christians this is a false antithesis. We start with the biblical assumption that all life is of God's creation. Man's purpose as a part of that creation is to live within it in accordance with God's intention. All of life, therefore, within material surroundings has a spiritual significance.

We acknowledge that our lives as Christians are unspeakably influenced by biblical counsel and interpretation. Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. We are admonished "to take no heed for the morrow," not because of carefreeness, but because of the yet more insistent requirement that we seek first God's Kingdom and his righteousness. It is to the task of awakening men to this prior claim that the Church as God's instrument among men addresses itself by example and admonition.

For many of us our education as Americans and as Christians has not trained us to live as if all life were spiritual. A false separation between spiritual and material has obscured the Christian meaning. Jesus taught

us to pray, "*Our* Father." The Apostle Paul likened the family of man to the human body with all its component parts mutually dependent. When our Lord answered the primary questions of all life He insisted that love of God and neighbor are complementary. The material and the spiritual are inseparable.

The Church is concerned with the frequently expressed accusation that America, because of its economy of abundance, is materialistic, implying a neglect, or subordination, of Christian principles and spiritual values.

But our desire for an expanding economy is not in itself necessarily un-Christian. On the contrary, our technical and technological capacities and the abundance of material benefits they produce provide unprecedented opportunities for Christian living. These include especially the sharing of benefits with less fortunate peoples.

However, our abundance is not an unmixed blessing. It provides many temptations to divert us from a Christian interpretation of life. Preoccupation with production and consumption or use of material goods and services may result in overemphasis of material values to the exclusion of spiritual values.

Principles Undergirding Vitality of Spiritual Values

Voluntary poverty is obsolete as a universal calling for Christians. There is no necessary incompatibility between Christian values and an expanding economy. However, certain basic principles must undergird a continually rising standard of material welfare if the vitality of our spiritual values is not to be impaired:

1. Material things are the gift of God, and are to be held and used in keeping with the Christian doctrine of stewardship.

2. As our material welfare advances to the level of abundance, some way must be found to moderate the tendency of the economy to cater increasingly to additional nonessential wants before basic human needs have been satisfied.

3. Our economy must be maintained as a means of fulfilling God's design and not be permitted to become an end in itself.

Since it is recognized that the economy will produce those goods for which there is an effective consumer demand, the Church has a responsibility to do what it can to instil moral values which would encourage the consumer to expend his income more wisely and prudently in terms of the priority given the choice of goods. An avoidance of conspicuous consumption and the need for a sensitive Christian concern to avoid creating envy in others should be stressed.

One of the benefits of an expanding economy is a substantial increase in leisure time. This represents a glorious challenge and provides an opportunity for the constructive development of human personality and the enhancement of the cultural level, but it could conceivably lead to serious moral deterioration.

Uses and Abuses of Buying on Credit

An economy of abundance is neither moral nor immoral *per se;* rather its Christian or un-Christian character must be determined to the degree that it is employed to the end of serving human welfare. Americans live in a society which makes it easy for the consumer to share in the abundance of things. Modern credit institutions help even the lower-income group to share in the enjoyment of expensive capital items—though frequently this credit is used for "gadgets" that may not be of prime importance.

The social order and the business pressures of advertising help to sell. To many people it appears that selling has become an end in itself, a means to an income for the seller, rather than an essential process in the distribution of goods and services for the fulfillment of human needs and wants.

This easy buying is not in itself bad, and may have very great utility—but it also leads to abuses. Credit sales are urged when not needed, and serve to restrict the consumer in the enjoyment of his income by taking an undue portion of that income in carrying costs. People are tempted to buy for reasons which are often base and degrading, to say nothing of the essential immorality of buying to create envy in others, or the immorality of wasteful use of our resources in the vanity of "keeping up with the Joneses."

What Standards Do We Serve in Our Economic Choices?

We believe that Christians have an obligation of stewardship with their wealth and incomes. This stewardship calls upon us to recognize that in all our actions, including our buying and selling, we are witnessing to what we believe. To what do our purchases witness? What standards and what values do we serve by our choices?

We believe that the Church has a special obligation at this point to keep the members aware of the responsibility of witnessing, and to help them to use Christian judgment in making these choices. In distributing this physical abundance, where none need starve, it is important that primary needs of every man for essential food, clothing, and shelter come first. Similarly, the individual must come to see his own true needs, and those of his family, as his first obligation in the use of his income.

The role of the Church in sensitizing its members and society to a Christian conscience in an economy of abundance has as its media two avenues: the pulpit and the other agencies of Christian education. From the pulpit, ideals of Christian stewardship, i.e., use of material things to foster spiritual realities, along with the presentation of the needs, both spiritual and material, of those at home and abroad who have benefited less in this abundant economy, have a fitting place. To the agencies of Christian education belong the opportunities of making available to church as well as nonchurch groups the means by which they may make prudent choices. It is proper and fitting for agencies of Christian education to suggest the use of such tools as *Consumers Guide* and family income budget plans to exercise prudent buying.

Some churches have fostered credit unions, as have many employers,

in order to encourage among their people habits of thrift, and to help them with wise use of low cost credit. Such self-help devices may be most fruitful in aiding the churches in the educational process.

Problems of Conscience for the Seller and Producer

The seller of goods is also caught up in the conflict of material and spiritual values. He must sell, and in continuing volume, to preserve his own economic share in the abundance. In the process of the selling, he uses advertising as a necessary tool, useful to buyer and seller alike. But he is often tempted to exaggeration and deception that might well be considered to be dishonest and untruthful. Moreover, he is tempted as well to seek sales by appeals to social pride, envy, and lust.

The Church prays "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Christian businessmen have an obligation at this point not to be tempters nor stumbling blocks. Our society depends upon our mutual confidence and trust. "Whoever, by his word either spoken or written, in any medium of communication, causes people to lose confidence in fellow men, thereby weakens the fabric of our society. There is an obligation to speak the truth, and to build the defenses of the advertising profession against the temptations to demoralization. We applaud the development of codes which raise standards, and of better business bureaus and other self-policing devices which help to combat destructive tendencies.

Producers caught up in the competitive pressure for ever-expanding output and sales are sometimes led into overproduction of specific items. This can prove demoralizing to the producers, the workers, and retail outlets alike, as recent trends in the auto industry may demonstrate. Far-sighted action based upon sound long-range planning of business behavior would help to avoid these wastes. Spiritually sensitive business leaders are accepting increasing responsibility for the total consequences of production decisions, and are not governed only by immediate profit considerations.

The sharing of the increasing abundance is especially a concern of the mass producer, who must make wise decisions in allocating the increase arising out of improved technology on a just and equitable basis among the rival claims of owners, managers, workers, suppliers, sellers, and consumers.

The Church —"the Community of Those Who Care"

Some have insisted that our society is living off the interest on a large deposit of moral capital in our historical bank, but that we are no longer making deposits in that bank. While this may be a tart statement, and in some measure an exaggeration, it calls attention to the truth that our whole economic system has been helped mightily by the essential honesty and integrity preached by our God-fearing forebears. It reminds us that we have a continuing responsibility to add to that bank of moral capital by practicing, as churchmen, as consumers, as sellers, and as producers, that same integrity in our own lives, witnessing to the truth that is in us, as revealed by our understanding of Christ and His Gospel. We have an

obligation to pass on, unimpaired, that understanding to our children and our children's children, lest we perish like the rich man who lays up for himself all his treasures on earth.

It is from the church that Christians expect guidance. The Church, as the fellowship of those who give their first loyalty to God as we know Him in Jesus Christ, exemplifies God's order. It is thus the community of those who care—the company which reflects the integrity of society. Here we would expect the concern for the whole—a sensitivity to the needs of all. Here we would hope to find the mind of Christ bringing to the knotty problems of a technological era the assurance that God's intentions are being fulfilled.

GROUP B-II. Christian Vocation and Prevailing Standards of Success

Approximately sixty persons composed Group B-II. By denomination, the 54 persons whose information sheets were received included the following: Methodist (16), Lutheran (12), Presbyterian (8), Baptist (4), Evangelical and Reformed (3), Evangelical United Brethren (2), Congregational Christian (2), Protestant Episcopal (2), Friends (2), Disciples (1), Christian Methodist (1), Brethren (1).

The occupations represented were church executives (15), pastors (10), educators (6), business and management (5), housewives (3 including 1 who is also a writer), farmers (2), city government (2), salesman, YMCA secretary, director of Christian education, retired railroad passenger conductor, personnel director, automobile dealer, educational administrator, state school superintendent, and student (1 each).

Of the 54 persons listed, 19 have remained in the same states in which they were born, whereas 35 have changed their state of residence; 2 were born outside of the United States, 1 each in Canada and Scotland. Of the 16 states in which they now reside, Pennsylvania led with 11, New York and Ohio account for 6 each, New Jersey (3), Michigan (3), Indiana (3), Illinois (2), Kansas (2), while there was one each from Virginia, Texas, Connecticut, Arkansas, Missouri, Maryland, Massachusetts, and the District of Columbia.

Two members of the group live in the open country, three in villages of 2,500 population or less, 4 in small towns up to 10,000; 12 in cities of 10,000 to 100,000; 7 in cities of 100,000 to 500,000; and 18 in cities of 500,000 or over. These communities are agricultural (5), industrial (31), industrial and agricultural (8), a state capital, and 7 suburban cities. Many of the last combine industrial and commuting patterns. Thirty-four stated that the communities in which they live are predominantly Protestant, 8 predominantly Roman Catholic, 3 with populations divided Protestant-Roman-Jewish, 3 Protestant-Roman, 2 Roman-Jewish.

It was observed that one "ghost town" with 500 people had 4 Protestant churches. While many communities were ethnically homogeneous, some were highly diversified, one was half Negro and half white, and one had largely Negro and Southern mountain-white population.

The group arrived at the following general consensus:

God calls men to serve Him in every relationship of life with their every ability and resource. A Christian's vocation includes his entire life, as husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, neighbor, worker, co-worker, employer, citizen, church member or officer. In relation to his daily work, wherever one's abilities and the needs of the world meet, there is God's call.

Judged by these standards, what is success in economic life?

Our Present Practice

As we consider prevailing standards of success in American society, we can observe certain minor variations as between various communities and various sections of a community. Generally speaking, persons in older, relatively stable communities place a greater valuation on status and prestige as the index of success. Small rural communities tend to do likewise. In dynamic situations, where the expansion of the economy is most felt, status and prestige have closer relation to economic achievement, and wealth and power outrank considerations of personal growth, creativity, and service to others. As communities feel the threat of losing population, the exodus of industry, or other economic decline, security and comfort take on primary significance, while the hope of power, wealth, status, and prestige, to say nothing of creativity or the hope of personal growth, almost disappear. The large metropolitan city tends to set the pace for public opinion across the nation in stressing status, wealth, and following these, security and comfort.

In considering these values, however, we must distinguish between the ratings of the reflectors of opinion and the actual valuations of persons within prestige groups. Sometimes the press plays up factors of wealth and power when significant members within power groups actually place greater valuation on creativity or the capacity to do a job. And, whereas a powerful minority may emphasize the desire for wealth and power, large segments of the working population may be motivated more by the desire for security and comfort than by any hope for wealth or power. Security is basic, with the other values becoming active where the opportunity presents itself. Usefulness to others motivates significant numbers of individuals in all groups within our economy, and plays a significant part in many instances as a factor in prestige or personal sense of achievement; but this motive may often operate only as a secondary factor or as the ostensible justification of behavior which would be primarily chosen on other grounds.

A Christian Evaluation

In contrast to the standards prevailing in our contemporary communities, we turn to a Christian evaluation of the criteria for our daily work.

If we are following the Christian vocation and have been transformed by God's grace into new beings in Christ, then a complete transformation of values will also have taken place. Life is lived only in relations. The

first of these, from which life derives its meaning and strength, is the God-man relationship, from which the man-to-man relationship is inseparable. He who is a new being in Christ and becomes so each day anew by the death of his self-centeredness is the channel for God's abundant gifts to flow through him to the neighbor. This experience turns upside down the standards of value which prevail in our culture with its worship of status and prestige, power and wealth, security and comfort. Instead, the Christian experience puts at the top service to others, personal growth, and sharing creatively with God in the development and distribution of life's goods.

The fact that members of the Christian church are the victims of precisely the same standards of success which motivate the rest of the culture is the crying sin of our day. It must be clearly understood, however, that the solution requires a radical reorientation and not merely a rejuggling of values which men continue to seek with the same self-centeredness. Each one of the values mentioned—service to others, personal growth, creativity, security and comfort, power and wealth, and status and prestige—has possibilities for both good and evil. Each may be a blessing of God, while at the same time it may be fearfully abused.

We are always, therefore, at every point under both the judgment and the grace of God. For example, if we did not possess power there is nothing we could do. We should be helpless to effect any good whatsoever. At the same time, unless this power is channeled into constructive works of love it becomes a destroyer. This is especially pertinent when our economy of abundance has put into our hands so much power and so great a responsibility.

This understanding of our Christian vocation commits us constantly to keep our standards of success and our occupational practices under the judgment of God. The self-interest of our economic group, the prestige of our profession, or the economic system prevailing in our society must be regarded by us critically, even while we acknowledge our involvement in and appropriate use of them. Nor dare we freeze either our personal or our corporate behavior into static patterns, but must always be open to serve God in the manner which the concrete moment requires.

While God expects each of us to respond personally to His call, He does not leave us to obey in complete isolation. He has called us into His Church and it is only together in the Church as the Body of Christ that we fulfill our calling. The Church as the Body of Christ can and must sustain the laity not only in their personal spiritual lives but also and especially in their lay ministry in their daily work.

Questions for Further Exploration

This consideration of our Christian vocation raised many questions which require further clarification and exploration. Among these are the following:

What is the responsibility of society and the Church for the person whose occupation denies him opportunity for the fulfillment of his calling as a Christian? What hope is there for the person caught in an occupation which forces him to live by patterns and values that deny his human dignity and his right to make basic choices?

If our increased abundance gives us more time and therefore more leisure, do we need to plan for the content of that leisure with its possibilities for evil and for good?

How does our calling as Christians to serve the neighbor at his point of need affect our relation, in an economy of abundance, to the persons within our American community who do not share this abundance and to those in other lands whose lives are still close to the margin of existence?

Is the Christian Church prepared to be prophetic in proclaiming the Word of God, in directing attention to issues raised by our economic life, and in helping its members to understand the meaning of Christian obedience in such a time as this?

GROUP B-III. Human Dignity and Relations

The status of the human person in a predominantly urban technical industrial society is the concern of this group. What is happening to people in our society? Do they have a chance to develop as we believe God intended them to develop as mature persons in Christ?

We understand human dignity and personality to involve man's faithful response to the redemptive act of God in Jesus Christ. The obedient expression of that response must be found (1) in moral decision in every area of life including man's work, (2) in the realization of fellowship and community, and (3) in Christian understanding of man's history, role, and destiny.

In One's Daily Work

When we assess our situation today we find that it both denies and affirms human freedom and personality. With the growth of large-scale economic organization the role of the individual has been dwarfed. The areas of life over which he exercises personal decision have diminished. This is especially true as regards the work experience of many people.

In large-scale production the worker is likely to lose sight of the significance of the finished product, and its service to his fellow men, and to engage in monotonous and repetitive routines which do not develop his creative capacities, nor give him the satisfaction of achievement. Thus the sense of Christian calling in daily work is obscured if not lost.

In this situation it is the organization and not the individual worker that is productive. It is the partnership in effort that is creative and that becomes the focus of the work life.

Human dignity requires both the self-respect of significant creativity in service to others and a sense of humble commitment to Christ of one's talents. Unless the worker can exercise some moral control in his work relations and share in the processes of moral decision, his sense of worth is impaired and he becomes an interchangeable part in a vast impersonal machine.

The counter-tendency shown in the efforts of some management groups, whether in business, industry or government, to overcome this depersonal-

izing tendency through programs of participation in decision-making testifies to the reality of the depersonalization. The shunning of personal responsibility and the apathy in the face of depersonalization, sometimes cited as its excuse, in reality are but further evidences of the fact.

The emergence of large-scale industry and business organization has been accompanied by the development of the labor union in order to bring some control over the worker's economic life back into his own hands. By and large labor organization, with collective bargaining, has advanced toward this goal. However, some unions have found that they face the same difficulty of lack of effective participation. Some are so large that it is hard to maintain effective communication. Here again programs for workers' education and increased opportunities for participation are sometimes used to counteract the difficulty.

Our group is not agreed upon the extent to which the individual is free to effectively control his own role in economic and community life, but we are agreed that the issue deserves the most serious consideration.

The pressures in a society of large-scale organizations, both private and public, have increased and been greatly intensified in our day. Men find their decisions limited by the claims and pressures of organized groups. They find themselves fulfilling assigned roles which limit choices rather than acting simply as persons. Men become functionaries in a vast organizational context. This means that individuals cannot have their own way, but must make their decisions in relation to their corporate responsibilities and to the moral claims and interests of others which press upon them.

Beyond the Work Situation

The economic abundance created by technology and mass production has made possible new opportunities for free decision and new forms of community. There is greater opportunity for education, more choice of jobs, and more possibility for the family to own a home. There is more leisure to pursue personal interests and undertake voluntary service activities. These may contribute to freedom and personal life.

However, the high mobility of our society based on industrial expansion and greater job opportunities has created for many a kind of rootlessness and absence of all but superficial community life. Our development into a predominantly urbanized people tends toward the cutting of even such superficial ties. So shall we come to the stage where no man cares for his neighbor in an anonymous mass citizenry?

The flight to the suburbs and the family-owned home, designed to give personal life a new chance, is often a flight from responsibility which leaves the inner city leaderless. And in the suburb there is the ever-present struggle to keep economic or social pace with one's fellow commuter and PTA neighbor. There is the pressure to conform to the accepted pattern, to belong to the "right crowd." Here, too, personal life tends to shrivel, for there is often little recognition that true community is based on differences that complement and enrich each other, and on service one to another.

The loss of status involved in the cutting of established community

ties in which one had a recognized role means that a man must continually be seeking to re-establish his role. Hence the new freedom and the high mobility often seem to produce a frenzied effort at self-realization that reveals the lack of selfhood.

If the faithful response to the act of God in Christ is the true manifestation of personal life, then what shall we say about the quality of moral decision in our day? We have witnessed a growing willingness to abdicate responsibility, conform to pressures, and give up freedom. How much this is due to the loss of the Christian understanding of man and how much to growing depersonalization cannot be said. What must be said is that there are conflicting tendencies in American life that affect human personality. These tendencies must be understood, and in every situation the influences undermining human dignity must be counteracted. We must discover anew the source of human selfhood in God and make known the reality of Christian community in which life takes on meaning.

The Responsibilities of the Churches

People are faced with crucial problems calling for countless decisions. In economic life these usually involve both technical factors and moral issues. Groups with differing economic viewpoints often split and, in the resulting breakdown of cooperation, the public suffers. Has the Church a responsibility at such points, or the pastor?

Quite obviously the pastor does not have and cannot, in most instances, have the technical knowledge to be the lawgiver on economic problems. But this is not to say he has no responsibility. Rather we believe he should lead men in worship, counseling, and study, to stand with their burdens before the Lord, and in fresh commitment to take their responsibilities from God.

The pastor should also be ready, where the need arises, to lead differing groups to face each other and listen to each other in striving for understanding. He can be the catalyst facilitating the participation of differing groups in finding consensus, and of isolated and bewildered individuals in finding community.

To be such a catalyst the pastor must know both the agencies of the human heart and the realities of modern life. Thus he needs some training in group procedure and some sense of the responsibilities and temptations in the processes of economic life. Our seminaries ought to introduce the pastor to these issues and the laity should help them to a deeper understanding of them.

The pastor and the whole community of Christians should stand with those members of the Church when for conscience' sake they are taking an unpopular side. Their conscience may not agree with ours, but we should uphold them in their right to take their stand. Only thus can freedom of conscience be assured. We want faithful action upon conscientious decision.

However, all need to test, within the Christian community, their understanding of a problem. When the Christian community does reach

consensus it should be ready to support those of its membership who become its spokesmen, or who in a private capacity act in accordance with that consensus.

Participation in the life of the community, in the voluntary organization, or the economic structure is one of the keys to richer personal life. It is also a way of enlisting the cooperation of the people in work for the organization's goals. This participation must be a two-way street, and it must be honest. It must be between lower and higher ranks in the same group and horizontal between and across different groups.

Such participation should include the sharing of information that covers as many aspects of a problem as is humanly possible. It must take into account moral realities and the religious faith of the group. In the case of the Christian Church, we need to seek always to discover what our faith demands in this situation when as many of the relevant facts as possible are given consideration.

The churches should experiment with all techniques which might multiply Christian efforts to promote participation of individuals in solving the social and economic problems affecting them.

Many organizations have found that discussions in small groups lead to better understanding and better decisions. The actual structure of an organization is important in relation to participation and understanding. Where there are too many layers of authority from the bottom to the top, difficulties arise in giving maximum freedom and initiative to the individual. But whether the organizational structure be horizontal or vertical in form it is the underlying approach which matters most. Each one in the group must desire the maximum practical participation of everyone else if progress is to be made.

Two other specific areas of concern were discussed at length. One of these was discrimination, and the other the Christian use of leisure.

If we as Christians uphold the dignity of the individual we must oppose all forms of discrimination. We must seek ways to eliminate it by positive action. For example, in the current segregation problem churches and church people in other areas should give such direct help as they can to churches in conflict areas who have suffered because they have taken a locally unpopular stand on this issue. Positive action of this kind, or on other aspects of the matter, should be carried on simply and without ostentation. Social action councils of our churches should extend the activities many of them are already carrying on to awaken the sense of responsibility of all Christians and enlist their help in finding ways and means to a final solution of this unhappy situation.

One of the blessings of this modern age is the greater amount of leisure available to most of us. The opinion of many is that the Church should encourage the use of this leisure for more adult education, and more volunteer leadership in youth organizations. The use of increasing leisure in ways which do not reflect the Christian outlook may turn this blessing into a destructive force.

In the final analysis it is the Church that can give to man the word of promise whereby he knows that the evil forces which seemingly destroy him have been brought under the judgment of God. The Church knowing

that Christ has come and has entered upon the throne of his Kingdom can say that under his Lordship men are free and society must not deny this freedom.

GROUP B-IV. Social Conformity and Social Change

Signs of Social Change

The hallmark of our time is change. While the major focus of attention today is upon the dramatic upheavals in other cultures the fact is that our own country is unique in history in terms of both the rapidity and scope of social change. These changes are both material and spiritual. They result both from technology and from growth in democracy based on our Christian conception of the dignity and worth of the individual. These changes have been both salutary and harmful—depending on what they have done to persons and on what persons have done to or with the changes.

First of all, there is the fact of population growth and mobility. We have doubled our population in fifty years. But the problem is compounded by the shifts in population in terms of geography, occupation, age distribution, etc. Particularly significant is the change from an agricultural to an industrial economy and from a nation of rural dwellers to one of urban- and "rururban"-ites.

Again, automation is the symbol of technological change. More and more technology tends to replace man as a worker. While it is true that automation results in less toilsome work and more hours of leisure, it also results in problems of lay-offs, unemployment, and sometimes a diminishing sense of craftsmanship.

Another symbol of change is the growing militarization of our national life. For the first time in our peace-time history our whole economy revolves about military necessity. Military indoctrination is now a possibility for all young men of draft age. To some at least, this militarization both generates fear and is further stimulated by fear in a vicious circle which infects our whole national life.

Fear is the clue to yet another sign of change—the loss of the right to dissent without the threat of economic or political reprisal. A rule of fear has stimulated an un-American demand for regimentation of thought and conduct to such an extent that loyalty oaths with specific economic penalties have become a problem for the American Christian conscience.

Another sign of major change is desegregation. The 1954 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court has brought into sharp focus the practices of segregation and discrimination which have for too long been associated with our American way of life.

Mass communication and rapid transportation are evidences of change which have been brought about by technological advances. Both have had their effect upon the family—for example, television binding the family together and commercial air travel scattering it. Change in the American family is also reflected in the alarming lowering of standards of sex morality among both youth and adults, as well as in the rising tide of both juvenile

and parental delinquency. Positively, on the other hand, the American family is enjoying the highest living standards in its history and increasingly more services in education, health, welfare, and the arts.

The fact of change is mirrored also in the sociological status of the Church in American society today. The Church now finds itself for the first time an institution with well over 65% of Americans in its membership. This altered status of the Church within a dynamic, changing society of abundance brings many new opportunities and responsibilities.

How Can the Church Fulfill Its Role?

The Church faces formidable problems when it seeks to fulfill its role in this changing society, in both its conservative and transforming functions, and to be faithful to the Gospel in that mission. Being "in the world but not of it," the Church has an obligation to teach Christian values to its members and to proclaim them publicly and continuously.

What should the Church do if the state or society puts restraints upon its freedom to speak and criticize? It is important for the Church to protest and to support groups opposing proposed legislation that improperly limits basic freedoms. An example of this was the leadership of the churches in California, contesting the state requirement of a loyalty oath by tax-exempt institutions.

Can the Church perform its true function in society unless it resists the pressures toward conformity and expediency? The Church should take a constructive role in the improvement of our culture and our community life. Must not the Church always conserve its value to society by putting its principles into practice, by demonstrating what it says through its own corporate witness and work, by exercising forthrightly the freedoms which it cherishes and upholds?

The Church, in maintaining its right to speak on its concerns must also recognize the critic of its policy, whether an individual, a protesting group, or a vocal minority, because these may also be speaking with a prophetic voice.

The Church cannot fulfill its role if only its clergy speak on social issues. Is it not equally important that the whole fellowship of believers, through study and discussion, participate in the preservation of important values and in the challenge to prevalent evils?

Obstacles to the Church

The Church which recognizes its responsibility for constructive social change, because of the character and demands of the Gospel, finds certain obstacles which must be taken into account and successfully overcome. One of these is presented by the new situation in which a majority of the people are within rather than outside the church membership. Is there not the danger that the Church will lose its creative function and, instead of influencing society to conform to the Gospel, will tend to embrace the commonly accepted materialistic values of society?

Another obstacle is the inadequate knowledge and vision among the

church leaders and the rest of its membership. The Church has the responsibility to stimulate such vision through first-hand contact with social needs and crying injustice, through quickening of insight from the Old Testament prophets, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the heroic witness of Christian leaders through the ages. It is necessary that the Church learn about the actual issues confronting men in their work, their homes, their community, and their national life, so that the Gospel may be made acutely relevant to the real issues of contemporary society.

A major obstacle to the Church in being faithful to the Gospel is the tendency toward class conformity. Churches are inclined to recruit from a certain social, economic, and racial group. Does this not give a church a particular class bias of which it may not be aware? Should it not strive to overcome class limitations in its viewpoints and its practices?

Unless the Church accepts its special responsibility for putting its precepts into practice, even its published statements may become an obstacle to its mission. Sometimes they become substitutes for action rather than springboards or runways. The Church should interpret and apply these statements, as well as formulate and utter them.

In some situations certain groups and organizations oppose the Church's criticism of social practices. Sometimes these are within the Church itself and sometimes outside. The Church should try to understand the underlying causes and character of its opposition. Can it not learn from this opposition its need to emphasize more strongly the implications of Christianity for the whole of life? Opposition to the Gospel is to be expected as part of the world's rejection of the Gospel in its beginning. It is part of the Lord's admonition to the Church.

Inadequate preparation of the church membership is one great obstacle to the fulfillment of the Church's task. In one church the officers took strong opposition to a denominational statement without having had any adequate presentation of it or of the social situation to which it was related. A continuous program of social education is a prerequisite to effective action by the church in society.

How Can the Churches Express Themselves Effectively and Responsibly on Social Issues?

A. Through Statements and Resolutions

One of the ways churches clarify issues and bring Christian judgment to bear upon social problems is through carefully formulated statements and resolutions. Over a period of years these develop a body of common opinion, set standards for evaluating individual judgments, and give support to positions taken by individual members and local churches. Such statements have added value when a number of people share in their formulation, especially if those to whom the statements are addressed participate in the process. It is seldom possible to secure a consensus of the whole Church but it is highly desirable to secure a large degree of consensus when a statement is designed to express the judgment of the Church to the public or to government.

Many local churches are not organized to give adequate consideration to social issues, but it is very important that they form the necessary groups and agencies so they can give the attention these problems deserve. Furthermore, the churches need to develop more adequate ways of carrying the statements into action by influencing public opinion and affecting the programs of public agencies and government.

Denominational and interdenominational agencies for education and action on social issues, as well as the recognized leadership of the Church, should initiate concern for these problems by speaking directly to the churches on urgent social issues.

B. Through Programs to Overcome Poverty and Injustice

The Church must quicken its compassionate concern for those who do not share equitably in the abundance of our economy. It should move out in a bold program of consecrated, intelligent action for the poor, the handicapped, and the oppressed. This includes among others the following responsibilities:

1. Encouraging its members to join and to participate responsibly as Christians in such organized bodies as labor unions and management associations, farm organizations, consumer and production cooperatives, credit unions, and other mutual assistance endeavors designed to share the responsibilities and opportunities afforded by common interests and common problems.

2. Working through the established agencies of the community attempting to alleviate poverty, economic distress, and social injustice, the Church at times must itself be the Good Samaritan to its members or others in need of succor. Often it refers its concerns and knowledge about given situations of need to appropriate social welfare agencies for their specialized assistance and follow-through.

3. Making appeals for remedial action to the legislative bodies of local, state, and Federal governments. While the Church must resist the easy temptation to become identified with particular concrete solutions to economic and social problems, it should at the same time perform its prophetic function by protesting legislative measures which it is convinced will thwart the Church's objectives of the "good life in the good community" and by promoting those measures designed to further these objectives. The churches need to remind their members constantly that the political process is in itself a channel for creative and responsible citizenship, and that its results for good depends largely upon its use by good men and women. A church's fear of involvement should always be checked against the danger of irrelevancy.

4. Taking strong positions on great moral and ethical issues. The Church has the obligation to speak out in terms understood alike by its members and its foes. "Thus saith the Lord" is not a vain repetition of an ancient biblical refrain to sooth our consciences, nor a policeman's whistle to protect our own rights or possessions. It is a desperately needed contemporary call to repentance and to corrective deeds of contrition on

the part of the whole community, beginning with the membership of the Church itself. The Church's voice must be heard above the loud boasts and protective cries of selfish interest, and it must be heard clearly by the little people who hunger for a word of hope and healing.

5. Through social action, healing the deep hurts of mankind. Here the Church should move from motivation to effective handles which its people can readily grasp. Individual church members need various-sized projects in which they can express their desire to help. These might be found in week-end or summer vacation projects of a workcamp nature, tied to slum clearance, playground construction, or volunteer service helping the families of migrant workers, in mental hospital units, or in various projects supplying material aid to the Church's programs of overseas relief and rehabilitation. The important point is the real involvement of those who serve with the hopes and hurts of those with whom and for whom the service is rendered.

C. Through the Churches' Involvement in the Life of the Community

One of the most effective ways for a church to engage in social issues is to become deeply involved in the life of the people in its own parish and neighborhood. When the Church really knows their problems, their hopes, and their fears, it can act with real knowledge of their condition. The churches should primarily minister to people rather than seek social change or reforms for their own sake.

Local churches sometimes effect social change through a corporate action such as the achievement of racial integration in their own membership. More frequently they achieve change through the action of their individual members in their occupations or community organizations, or through groups of members acting for themselves or in concert with other groups in the community. Local churches often cooperate effectively through councils and with other organizations for effective action in the community and nation.

Conclusion

The ways in which the Church fulfills its mission to society are many and varied, but it must always seek more fruitful ways to heed Christ's admonition to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Amidst an abundance of goods and services it must seek first the Kingdom of God and serve Him who is the Lord of all life and the light of all men.

GROUP B-V. The Economic Policies and Practices of the Churches

This subject is of vital importance because churches are economic entities. For example, they indulge in such practices as fund raising and spending, employing people, managing physical resources, investing, and even competing. In the area of economic practice churches have been known to compete with business; to raise funds by questionable practices; to underpay employees on the ground of being a religious institution; to

invest in questionable enterprises; to hold tax-exempt property which should be sold, and to be poor landlords. Substandard economic practices have been condoned, using religious purposes as an excuse.

The group which discussed this subject was unanimous in its conviction that the economic policies and practices of the churches should be judged according to the same standards which are upheld by the churches for business enterprises. These standards are well documented by successive pronouncements of the Federal and National Council of Churches and member denominations.

It is easier to state this conviction than to make decisions about how it applies in the workaday life of the churches. For this reason the group enjoyed the task of discussing four important questions. It found very few general categorical answers and suggests that churches individually should now consider and act upon them, in order to equate their own economic policies and practices with Christian group ethics. Summaries of the work of the group on four questions now follow.

When dealing with controversial issues threatens a church's income, what should it do?

The group decided at the outset to broaden the question to include the extent to which and conditions under which the churches should speak upon controversial issues. They agreed upon the following:

1. Care in the selection of issues. Certainly a church is not expected to act upon all issues before the community. The question really involves a clear understanding of a church's proper function. Assuming that this function is to care for the spiritual and moral welfare of the community, then it seems clear that a church should be concerned only with those issues which have a direct relation to the above function.

2. An intelligent study of any proposed issue should include

   (a) Securing of background material related to the history of the question

   (b) Careful collection of all facts involved

   (c) Plenty of time for the group to make a thorough study of the issue

   (d) Use of forums on the question, inviting speakers to present pros and cons

   (e) A careful study of its moral and ethical implications.

3. A reliance upon the integrity of the leadership of the Church or organization. Does the minister or moderator have a reputation for careful analysis and studied judgment on issues which are presented from time to time?

4. A study of actions, if any, taken by national denominational boards on similar questions. These actions are often based upon certain

expert opinion which is available to these boards. Such a study may help to determine the wisdom of any local action.

The group further agreed that when the above criteria are used, and it becomes the conviction of the group that the issue is clear, *then* a church should take a positive stand on the question regardless of how it may affect possible income.

It was emphasized:

1. That a local church should broaden the base of its income so that it would be impossible for a few large givers who may be opposed to the decision of the majority to affect seriously the financial structure, should they decide to withdraw their gifts.

2. That a fund-raising executive in the group stated that his firm, with several years' experience in fund raising, had actually found very few instances in which the stand of the Church on a controversial issue made any difference in the giving. He also stated that most wealthy people were willing to go along with the majority. The man who insists upon the acceptance of his views as a condition for his gift is an extreme rarity.

How can a church decide what percentage it should expend for its own local use as compared to church benevolences?

The importance of a correct solution to this problem was underlined by the observation that generally those congregations which give most generously to the benevolent causes outside themselves are those which also most adquately meet their own local needs. Christian concern for others seems to go hand in hand with the church member's awareness of his obligations as a steward of the abundance with which he has been blessed.

It was agreed that no exact formula for making this decision is applicable to all churches. A combination of factors, both tangible and spiritual, is involved in determining a church's proportionate giving to benevolent causes.

An obvious factor is a congregation's own survival needs. Every congregation must provide certain minimal financial support for its own existence. The degree to which a church is firmly established, therefore, affects its decision as to the proportion of its total budget which it can allocate to benevolences. The very size of a church's budget and the relative wealth of its membership also constitute very real determinants in this matter.

Another tangible factor affecting this decision involves the job which the local congregation is doing to meet community problems in its own neighborhood, since in broad terms this often can be considered as part of a church's benevolent program.

The advice and recommendations of its own denomination, of course, properly affects the Church's decision.

Balancing such tangible factors as these are spiritual considerations.

Here it was agreed that a church should observe the same basic tenets as the individual. It must act on the basis of Christian conscience. It must endeavor to provide help where help is needed. It must serve people. It must obey the admonition of Jesus to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

The most helpful approach to a solution of this problem of apportioning the Church's budget to benevolences seems to be that of continual and intensive education of the individual member. It is felt that the Church which constantly holds forth the word of our Lord and the needs of people will be best able to inspire the highest type of benevolent giving.

How can the church be exemplary, as a steward of its own possessions, with respect to the investment of capital funds?

The group recognized at once that the churches and their agencies commonly practice a degree of selectivity in choosing their securities. For the most part this is negative, consisting of rejection of certain investments which are considered morally undesirable. Liquor and tobacco stocks are familiar examples. It was explained that those who determine the investment policies of church boards bring to that task the experience and the standards of the secular world, laying stress on safety and income, and giving relatively little attention to the degree of compatibility between the policies of the business or industry involved and the standards promulgated by the churches.

On the other hand, some impressive examples were given of attempts on the part of certain pension boards to discharge their responsibilities as owners of securities. The discussion made clear the limitations imposed —some of them legal—upon church officials whose functions are fiduciary in character. These officials feel heavily responsible, first for the safety of investments, and secondly for continuity and adequacy of income. Yet some of them have undertaken to make an ethical appraisal of the policies of business enterprises in whose securities they invest and to exercise their prerogatives as critics of policies they do not approve.

There seemed to be general agreement that ethical as well as business judgment should be employed in making up the securities portfolio; that ownership of voting stock entails responsibility to participate in stockholder activities, including attendance at stockholders' meetings; and that denominational boards are in large part remiss in these matters.

A challenging proposal came from a former pension board official who was concerned not merely with the ethical soundness of church investments but with their bearing on the churches' purposes in relation to their own people. He cited the use by one pension board of a part of its capital funds for loans to young farmers in order to enable them to keep possession of inherited family farms, precariously held, and to enrich their land. Another such social use of capital funds is the provision of loans to young people within the Church's membership for educational purposes.

It was apparent that proposals of this sort have to be appraised from different angles and that they involve technical considerations. However,

they raise an ethical issue in that they add a new dimension to the task of investing church funds. They suggest that to the secular concept of "risk capital" the churches should add an element of calculated ethical venture with due regard to financial soundness.

Should a church give priority to providing adequate salaries and working conditions over expenditures for its building, equipment, etc.?

In its search for an answer to this question the group identified certain basic concepts and practices:

1. Salaries are being paid by churches to persons whose responsibilities are akin to those in secular employment, such as janitors, office secretaries, choir director, elevator operators, engineers.

2. "Adequate salary" means an amount at least equal to the "going salary" for such positions in the community.

3. Under "working conditions" the group included hours, vacations, sick leave, workman's compensation, holidays, overtime pay, hospitalization, and social security.

There was agreement that volunteer service for the church should be encouraged, but that whenever persons are employed in secular positions by churches and church-owned institutions (a) adequate salaries should be paid, and (b) working conditions should conform to the best standard practices.

The group agreed that clergymen also should be paid "adequate" salaries but found it difficult to define the meaning of the term "adequate." Some felt that he should be paid according to his needs; others, according to the salaries of persons in related kinds of work. It was recognized that working conditions for ministers cannot be standardized.

In general, church people should be kept informed about the needs of their ministers. In many cases their salaries are inadequate because there has been no effort to arouse the conscience of the church on this matter.

Attractive buildings and equipment seem to contribute to the ability of a church to pay adequate salaries and maintain good working conditions.

Denominational bodies should uphold the importance of adequate salaries and good working conditions.

In summary, some of the group considered adequate salaries and working conditions to be a priority over expenditures for buildings and equipment. Those who were not ready to agree to this positively felt that both adequate salaries and working conditions on the one hand and adequate buildings and equipment on the other are of equal importance.

There was positive agreement by all that churches and church-owned institutions should provide adequate salaries and working conditions for all whom they employ and that these are made possible by our economy of abundance.

In Conclusion

The group identified five additional questions which it believed are important, namely:

1. How can churches always play fair with contributors with respect to expending money for the purpose for which it is given?
2. How should a church balance the need for an adequate sanctuary with the financial needs of secular humanitarian enterprises?
3. Under what conditions, if any, should churches raise money through suppers, bazaars, sales, etc.?
4. Under what conditions should churches use volunteer services for work which is ordinarily paid for?
5. What are the Christian ethical considerations related to churches being tax-exempt institutions?

It was felt that answers by any one church to most of these questions would not apply to all churches. The group did feel that all churches should quicken their consciences by facing them. It felt also that individual churches must find positive ways of functioning according to Christian economic policies and that these are increasingly possible due to the blessings of our economy of abundance.

Appendix A

THE CALL TO THE CONFERENCE

On behalf of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., I am calling the third National Study Conference of the Church and Economic Life to convene in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on April 12-15, 1956.

The theme of this Conference will be: "The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance." Its basic concern will be the relevance of the Christian faith, including such concepts as Christian vocation and Christian responsibility, to an economic order which has already achieved a high standard of living and which seems capable of continued growth in productivity and per capita wealth. The delegates will consider such specific elements in economic life as individual motivation and decision-making; responsibilities of organized economic groups; productivity and employment; distribution, selling, and consumption; the role of government in the economy; foreign economic policy. Certain specific responsibilities of the churches in their program and message bearing on economic life will receive special attention.

The six years since the second National Study Conference in Detroit have witnessed momentous developments in the life of the Protestant and Orthodox churches of this nation: the merger of thirteen interdenominational bodies in the National Council of Churches; the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches which gave notable attention to the relation of the Church to economic life; the near completion of an eight-year study on the ethics and economics of society, under the direction of the National Council's Department of the Church and Economic Life; the issuance of a comprehensive statement on "Christian Principles and Assumptions for Economic Life" for the guidance of the members of the Council's constituent churches.

Thus the churches have developed both understanding and strength in promoting their concern for the effects of economic problems and issues in the community, nation, and world. They have done this in a period when the lives and welfare of people have felt the impact of a generally expanding economy and a rapid succession of many diverse trends. As a people we have had to react to and deal with problems such as large-scale mobilization for war with mounting production, full employment, and inflationary pressures; post-war readjustments with over-extended inventories, shifts in employment, and problems of financial stability; spectacular progress in technology—atomic energy, automation, and agricultural productivity; the growing awareness of the increasingly organized character of economic life.

The time has now come, in the judgment of the National Council of Churches, for a renewal of direct conference between responsible leaders in economic life and responsible leaders of the churches. Since 99 percent of church members are lay men and women, these will in many instances hold responsible positions in both the churches and the economy. Indeed, stimulation of the moral and ethical concerns of lay people in their daily

work life and in the economy as a whole is a primary and constant obligation of the churches.

The Conference will consist of approximately 400 delegates to be appointed by the denominations and related religious bodies. They will be predominantly lay people engaged in agriculture, business, industry, labor, government service, and the professions. The Conference will speak only for itself. It will not commit or represent the National Council of Churches or the appointing bodies.

I, therefore, urge our constituent churches and other invited religious bodies heartily to cooperate in the appointment of delegates to this important Conference. I also call upon all individuals so appointed to devote the time and effort necessary to make their own participation meaningful and to derive maximum benefit from the Conference for their respective churches.

Reverend Eugene Carson Blake, *President*
The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

April 1955

Appendix B

CONFERENCE OFFICERS, SPEAKERS, AND DISCUSSION GROUP LEADERS

Chairman: Hon. Charles P. Taft, Cincinnati, O.

Secretary: Charles T. Douds, New York, N.Y.

Chairman of Message Committee: Dr. Justin Wroe Nixon, Rochester, N.Y.

Administrative Secretary: Rev. Cameron P. Hall, New York, N.Y.

SPEAKERS AND THEIR TOPICS

Not in the Abundance of Things—Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke, Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Technological Basis of Abundance—Dr. Robert E. Wilson, Chicago, Ill.

American Abundance—A World Responsibility—Paul G. Hoffman, South Bend, Ind.

An Economist Looks at Our Economy of Abundance—Dr. Roy Blough, New York, N.Y.

Our Economy of Abundance—Problems and Opportunities
Murray D. Lincoln, Columbus, O.
Elwood P. Swisher, Denver, Colo.

Religious and Physical Aspects of the Pittsburgh Community Development Program—John K. Tabor and John J. Grove, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Christian Vocation and Christian Conscience in an Economy of Abundance—Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, Geneva, Switzerland

DISCUSSION GROUPS — SERIES A

Group I — Manpower and Employment

Discussion Chairman—miss eleanor coit (Methodist), American Labor Education Service, New York, New York.

Secretary—rev. emerson w. smith (Methodist), Industrial Chaplain, Methodist New England Conference, West Newbury, Massachusetts.

Resource Leader—prof. elinor pancoast (Protestant Episcopal), Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland.

Group II — Distribution of Abundance

Discussion Chairman—irvin r. kuenzli (United Lutheran), President, International Federation of Free Teachers' Unions, Chicago, Illinois.

Secretary—prof. alfred bartholomew (Evangelical and Reformed), Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Resource Leader—prof. byron johnson (Congregational-Christian), Denver University, Denver, Colorado.

Group III — Selling and Consumption

Discussion Chairman—leland h. bull (Presbyterian, USA), Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Secretary—rev. a. dudley ward (Methodist), Executive Secretary, Board of Social and Economic Relations, Methodist Church, Chicago, Illinois.

Resource Leader—dr. howard r. bowen (Congregational-Christian), President, Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa.

Group IV — Relations of Economic Power Groups

Discussion Chairman—g. allan dash, jr. (United Lutheran), Industrial Relations Consultant and Arbitrator, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Secretary—dr. paul g. musselman (Protestant Episcopal), Director of Urban Church, Protestant Episcopal Church, New York, New York.

Resource Leader—prof. kenneth boulding (Society of Friends), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Group V — Foreign Economic Policy

Discussion Chairman—wesley f. rennie (Methodist), Committee for Economic Development, New York, New York.

Secretary—prof. john c. bennett (Congregational-Christian), Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York.

Resource Leader—prof. wolfgang stolper (Presbyterian, USA), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, on leave of absence at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Group VI Conservation of Natural Resources

Discussion Chairman—shirley e. greene (Congregational-Christian), National Farmers' Union, Denver, Colorado.

Secretary—prof. herman s. keiter (United Lutheran), Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York.

Resource Leader—prof. ben w. lewis (Congregational-Christian), Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio.

DISCUSSION GROUPS — SERIES B

Group I Material and Spiritual Values

Discussion Chairman—rev. archibald j. carey, jr. (American Methodist Episcopal), Pastor, Quinn Chapel, Chicago, Illinois.

Secretary—dr. joe w. bailey (Disciples of Christ), Physician, Austin, Texas.

Resource Leader—prof. victor c. obenhaus (Congregational-Christian), Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois.

Group II Christian Vocation and Prevailing Standards of Success

Discussion Chairman—mrs. anna a. hedgeman (Methodist), Assistant to the Mayor, New York, New York.

Secretary—rev. huber f. klemme, Director, Commission on Christian Social Action, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Cleveland, Ohio.

Resource Leader—prof. martin heinecken (United Lutheran), Mt. Airy Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Group III Human Dignity and Relations

Discussion Chairman—william j. mc gill (Protestant Episcopal), Standard Oil Company (Indiana), Chicago, Illinois.

Secretary—rev. harold c. letts (United Lutheran), Secretary of Social Action, United Lutheran Church in America, New York, New York.

Resource Leader—prof. albert rasmussen (American Baptist), Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York.

Group IV Social Conformity and Social Change

Discussion Chairman—rev. ray gibbons, Director, Council for Social Action, Congregational Christian Churches, New York, New York.

Secretary—rev. harold row, Service Commission, Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Illinois.

Resource Leader—prof. richard c. smith (Presbyterian, USA), San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, California.

Group V ECONOMIC PRACTICES OF THE CHURCHES

Discussion Chairman—WILLIAM F. MEYER (American Baptist), Industrial Services Program Committee, National Council YMCA, New York, New York.

Secretary—REV. DAVID WITTE (American Baptist), Columbus Area Council of Churches, Columbus, Ohio.

Resource Leader—DR. F. ERNEST JOHNSON (Methodist), Chief Study Consultant, Department of the Church and Economic Life, New York, New York.

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